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BRONZES OF SOUTH INDIA

BY

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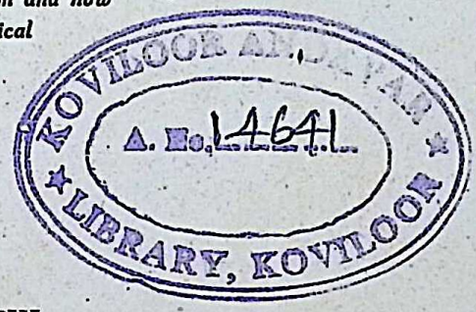

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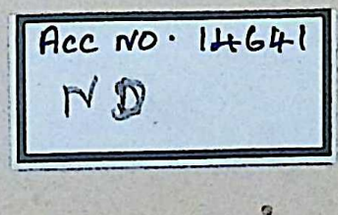

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TO

DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN,

PRESIDENT OF INDIA

This work is dedicated as a mark of profound respect and esteem

BY

P. R. SRINIVASAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful to the Archaeological Survey of India, Government of India, the British Museum, London, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., for some of the photographs illustrated in this volume. We have reproduced here a few illustrations from *South Indian Bronzes* by O. C. Gangoly, the *Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Calcutta, Vol. VI, the *History of Deccan*, edited by G. Yazdani, and the *Art of Indian Asia* by H. Zimmer. Our thanks are due to the publishers of these books also.

S. T. SATYAMURTI,
Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The subject treated in this volume viz. the art of South Indian Bronzes is a fascinating one. But, owing to the lack of authentic evidence regarding the dates of most of the examples of the art and to the consequent necessity of depending on style for an estimate of the works of this art, the number of publications on it has been small and sporadic. After Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy's *Colombo Museum Bronzes* the only other major work on the subject was Mr. O. C. Gangoly's *South Indian Bronzes*, which remained for a long time a main source book. Then, the Madras Museum, which possesses the largest and richest collection of original specimens of the art, published its famous *Catalogue of South Indian Hindu Metal Images* by Dr. F. H. Gravely and Mr. T. N. Ramachandran. In it an earnest attempt was made, for the first time, to treat the subject in a scientific manner. The chief contribution of its authors was a detailed typological study of a large number of actual examples of the art. This paved the way for a better appreciation of the development of the art. As a consequence, subsequently a few valuable articles and books on the subject came to be written containing more specific information on the vexed problem of dates of the bronzes and on the artistic qualities of many an individual item. Among them mention must be made of the chapter on bronzes in *The Art of India and Pakistan* published by the Royal Academy of Arts, London, the Madras Museum bulletin on *The Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes* by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran and *The Indian Bronzes* by Mr. C. Sivaramamurti.

Even then, there have continued to exist difficulties in the way of a proper appreciation of the art and a just evaluation of individual specimens. With a view to remove at least some of the impediments in this respect and to set forth a connected account of the development of the art through the ages, I undertook in 1957 a systematic study of the subject. This required firstly a close examination of all the bronzes in the collection of the Madras Museum as well as a careful survey of a large number of bronzes available in several temples of South India but are not easily and readily accessible for an examination by all. Accordingly, this volume contains illustrations of a number of bronzes which are still in their original places and which are published here for the first time. Then the results of this study required to be checked, however limited in its scope the checking may be, with the results of the examination of stone sculptures occurring in a number of datable temples. This has enabled, in a remarkable manner, the

fixing of reasonably precise dates for a good number of bronzes. Moreover, it was also possible, by this means, to distinguish amongst a host of specimens, examples belonging to a number of regional schools and local traditions which were not previously noticed by any. Owing to the fact that the known items of bronzes form only an insignificantly small number compared to the vast collections that exist in the innumerable temples and institutions scattered all over South India, my conclusions bearing on the above mentioned aspects of the art, which are based mostly on a close examination of a large number of known examples, are subject to correction in the light of future researches. Yet, I have ventured to put them forth here, in more or less clear and precise terms, with a view to remove the ambiguity and indecision that prevail in this field of study which, like any other scientific pursuit, does not yield satisfactory results without sustained efforts at scientific analysis and intelligent correlation of the data. My purpose was chiefly a critical review of the art through the ages consisting of a detailed examination of individual items or groups of specimens of each period and of stringing the resultant essays into a whole. I have, therefore, simply touched upon the subject of the technique of making bronzes. Likewise discussion on the iconography of the bronzes is limited to such cases as required elucidation.

I could finalise the manuscript only in August, 1961. The delay in the completion of this work was to some extent due to my appointment first in May, 1959 as Special Officer and then in October, 1960 as Assistant Superintendent for Epigraphy in the Epigraphical Branch at Ootacamund, both in the Archaeological Survey of India.

In the earlier stages of my study, I was warmly encouraged by Dr. A. Aiyappan, the then Superintendent of the Madras Museum, and I express my gratitude to him for this. From the beginning Dr. S. T. Satyamurti, the present Superintendent of the same institution, evinced a keen interest in the expeditious completion of the work and extended to me his generous help and kind cooperation for which I am grateful to him.

Madras Egmore,
26—4—1963.

P. R. SRINIVASAN.

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INTRODUCTION

A healthy change of attitude is discernible in the scholars of the West pursuing Indological studies. It is especially noticeable in their works on Indian Art, and the scholars in this field have begun not only to interpret Indian works of art, which were once considered to be difficult of understanding, in appreciative terms but also have tried to bring out the significance underlying them. This may be attributed to the deep study of the scholars of the ideas, symbols and technique on which the creations of art are based as well as to their sympathetic approach to the various problems that exist in the field. The voluminous literature on Indian Art by western authors produced in recent years abundantly testify to this fact. Though the modern writers on the subject are generally in agreement with the views of such savants as Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami, Mr. E. B. Havell, Sir John Marshall, Drs. A. Foucher, J. Ph. Vogel, V. A. Smith, R. D. Banerji and Gravely, and Messrs. O. C. Gangoly, T. N. Ramachandran and C. Sivaramamurti, yet there are some scholars who still seem to cling to the age-old but out-moded theory that all that is best in Indian Art is derived from outside India. There are others who are sceptical about the dates assigned to some well known specimens of art. As instances of these views we may cite the following. Writing about the famous bronze figurine of a dancing girl from Harappa, Prof. K. de. B. Codrington one of the joint authors of *The Art of India and Pakistan*, says, "The *cire perdue* bronze figure of a dancing girl from Harappa is more mannered and, indeed, sophisticated, both in vision and technique. The plastic qualities of the wax underlying the form of the cast metal is here sacrificed for a high finish which suggests sculpture rather than modelling. Sculpture, however, is rare in the Indus valley and it is, perhaps, worth observing that it is not common in Mesopotamia", (p. 9). The same author has this to say about the two torsos from Harappa, "... (they) must be regarded as problematic .... cannot be of early date — indeed, cannot be pre-Hellenistic", (p. 9). But there are others, who are equally well-informed and learned, like Dr. Stella Kramrisch and Dr. H. Zimmer. In her recent book, *The Art of India, Traditions of Indian sculpture, Painting and Architecture* [1] Dr. Kramrisch says about the same torsos as follows: "Mokṣa (Release) is not itself the absolute. It is the realisation of the Absolute within one's own living

[1] The Phaidon Press Ltd., 5, Cromwell Place, London S.W. 7. (1954), p. 1.

body, a mature communion which some attain and of which all are aware in some degree, even though their time has not yet come. Those who would reach it must endure a discipline, for the living, breathing human body is the place where mokṣa is realised. It is thus that the body is represented in Indian art and its scale taken as a model in Indian architecture. *Thousands of years before they were given verbal expression in the Veda (the scripture)*[1] and in Vāstusāstra and Śilpa-śāstra (the text books on the arts) the traditions of India were embodied in the form of Indian art (*e.g.*, the two torsos from Harappa)." Again on page 2 she says: "In the second half of the third millennium B. C. Indian art had passed a zenith (Pl. I, Figs. 1, 3, 4) in the large towns of the Indus valley".

That Dr. Zimmer is also of the same opinion is evident from the following:—

"And finally, the beast of the figures on the Indus seals, as well as the few statuettes preserved to us, are distinguished by a feeling for form and a boldness of treatment unequalled in the contemporary glyptic art of the neighbouring civilizations of Elam, Mesopotamia, and Egypt".[2] Hardly any comment is necessary on these divergent views and the readers may draw their own conclusions from them.

Notwithstanding these divergent views, it is a fact that an increasing awareness of the meaning and purpose of the works of art of India characterises the writings of many a renowned scholar of modern times. Of the various branches of Indian art, the bronzes of South India form an important one. A considerable literature with a variety of views on various aspects of the Indian bronzes in general is now available; and South Indian bronzes in particular "have not only been regarded as works of art but also as objects of religious veneration. Indian images have now assumed archaeological and iconographic importance; their aesthetic value appeals to a large degree as well".[3] Writing specifically about South Indian Hindu metal images, in their world famous *Catalogue*, the learned authors, Dr. F. H. Gravely and Mr. T. N. Ramachandran say: "All such images as has been pointed out, are religious in purpose. With a few exceptions they are designed to remind worshippers of the Divine, conceived by Hindu philosophy as the Impresonal Absolute and by Hindu Bhakti (devotion) as the Lord and Divine Lover of believers. In the last images something of both these aspects finds expression, often rendering them difficult of appreciation by those unfamiliar with Hindu feelings. In addition to this, every image must conform to the pattern laid down for it by tradition. The answer of the Madras Museum collection to this question of the artistic value of

[1] Italics is ours.

[2] H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, p. 36.

[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *The Nāgapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, Author's Preface, p. 1.

Hindu images can best, we think, be indicated by drawing attention to the well known Naṭarāja image from Tiruvelangadu (Fig. 164), Vishṇu etc., and Hanumān (Fig. 98) ..... For (figures like that of Hanumān) well illustrate the way in which Hindu artists have succeeded in giving expression to true artistic feeling even through such apparently unpromising traditional forms"[1]. Similar views about the superior merits of the bronzes of South India have been expressed by many others also.[2] That these bronzes in certain respects are even superior to the bronzes of North India is well recognised. For example Mr. John Irwin says, "The style of the mediaeval South Indian bronzes differs from those of the North mainly owing to the Chola craftsman's freer adaptation of style to technique. In North India, as already mentioned, style in bronze work seldom departs far from the conventions already established in stone sculptures."[3]

This statement brings out clearly the fact that while in North India the bronze worker was imitating the stone carver, in the South he was independent of the stone carver. Hence the creations of South Indian bronze workers have turned out to be examples of sculpture and are not merely specimens of craftsmanship. It is, however, necessary here to bear in mind this that in India the stone carver and the bronze worker are traditionally one and the same person; and therefore the features of his productions in stone do appear in those of metal. Probably in the North he concentrated more on the stone works than on the metal images, whereas both were given equal prominence in South India perhaps with slightly greater emphasis on metal figures owing to their extreme popularity.

Apart from their superior workmanship, the bronzes of South India are considered to be excellent from the point of view of 'technique'. The process of casting employed by the craftsmen (*sthapatis*) is that known as *cire perdue* an ancient method employed by the Chinese and the Greeks. The *cire perdue* or 'lost-wax' process, is so called from the fact that the wax model which served as the core of operation was lost or drained out before the actual casting took place. The subject was just modelled in wax, then coated with clay. Next the wax was melted out leaving a mould behind into which liquid metal was poured to cast a solid image. But if a hollow image was intended, the subject would be first modelled in clay and then the core was coated with wax, and the wax in turn covered with a negative of clay. This was used for casting after the wax was drained out by heating. With the former single method have been produced the

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1 F. H. Gravely and T. N. Ramachandran, *Catalogue of Hindu Metal Images in the Madras Government Museum*, p. 1. Hereafter this book will be referred to simply as *Catalogue*.

2 *Archaeology in India*, p. 145.

3 *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 67.

masterpieces of South Indian Bronzes.[1] This method is called the "master technique".[2] Thus after the casting of an image, its mould is distroyed, with the result that no two specimens of South Indian bronzes are alike even if they are by one and the same hand. The making of images in this process is indeed laborious. But the importance of this method cannot be overestimated when it is realised that each item is characterised by a rare individuality of its own.

The excellence of the bronzes produced in this technique over those produced by another method employed in Europe is brought out clearly by no less a person than Mr. Hadaway when he says, "The *cire perdue* process which is commonly, it might be said almost universally, used for either simple or intricate work, in India, usually produces, when manipulated in Western countries, a spongy and unsound casting almost impossible to work upon successfully and finish properly..... In the west, when this process is used the object is to obtain a casting which requires as little finishing as possible, but it is always at the expense of the soundness of the whole mass, for to obtain the delicacy of the original wax model so fine an earth must be used that it allows of no general ventilation of the mould...This finishing which the European hopes to avoid (but always at the expense of the soundness of the casting) by the *cire perdue* process is, in India, taken as a matter of course".[3]

Such an important branch of Indian art as South Indian bronzes has not received a comprehensive treatment, which it richly deserves, at the hands of scholars. To this day the pioneering works of such scholars as Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, Mr. O. C. Gangoly, Mr. W. S. Hadaway and Mr. V. A. Smith remain the only authorities on the subject. But since the publication by the Madras Museum, the *Catalogue of Hindu Metal Images*, by Dr. F. H. Gravely and Mr. T. N. Ramachandran it has superseded all others of its kind not only because of its high standard but also by the meticulous manner of treatment of the matter. Though it deals with Hindu metal images, the conclusions arrived at by the authors in respect of bronzes of this category of any particular period are more or less applicable to other categories of bronzes, both religious and secular, also of the same period. Between 1932, when that *Catalogue* was published, and today much water has flowed under the bridge. Not only do we now possess more material than was available in 1932 in the Madras Museum itself, as it has acquired during these years a large number of bronzes from treasure-trove finds, but we have also had opportunities to know and study in detail a vast number of metal images, Hindu, Buddhist and Jain which are either under worship in various temples of South India or stored up there,

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, p. ix.
[2] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 9.
[3] *Illustrations of Metal Works in Brass and Copper, mostly South India*, p. 9.

being duplicates. A number of publications treating of South Indian bronzes have also been published in recent years including the long-awaited Madras Museum Bulletin on the *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes* by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran. This is again the only recent attempt at a comprehensive treatment of another group of South Indian bronzes because such books as *The Art of India and Pakistan*, *The Art of Indian Asia* and *Archaeology in India* and journals like *Lalit Kalā* have treated the subject only in parts. A perusal of this literature will show a variety of shades of opinion in regard to the evaluation of artistic qualities and iconography of many an individual example of bronzes as well as to its archaeological worth.

Archaeology, in other words, the dating of bronzes has especially evoked a lot of interest amongst prospective owners of them as well as the scholars. This aspect of the bronzes has, however, not to our knowledge been satisfactorily dealt with. The chief impediment in this regard is the paucity of bronzes that can be accurately or even approximately dated either by means of dated or datable inscriptions in them or by means of datable finds associated with them. This was responsible for the extreme caution with which the authors of the *Catalogue* have handled this aspect of the subject. They say with reference to early bronzes, "We, therefore, feel that to refer to these images simply as Chola would be apt to mislead, both by implying more than can be proved regarding them and as appearing to exclude others of Chola origin but less distinctively of this type. Instead, we propose to distinguish them as images of Chola type, a phrase which we think accurately describes them."[1] Owing to the same reason they have stated, more or less categorically, that "No Pallava images seem, however, yet to be known in metal".[2] Apparently Mr. T. N. Ramachandran seems even now to hold on to this view that no Pallava metal images exist, as is evident from his careful avoidance of calling any example of bronzes from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other places as 'Pallava', not even those which he himself would date as belonging to the 8th century A.D.,[3] in spite of the fact that South India was then undoubtedly dominated by the Pallavas. There is, however, a single exception *i.e.*, the Simhanāda (or Lokeśvara) in the *mahārājalīlā* pose (Fig. 49) which he calls as of late Pallava type.[4] He is not alone in this regard and seems to echo Mr. John Irwin's view on the matter. Mr. Irwin in his article on bronzes quoted already, after affirming that Pallava images are rare, gives 7th-8th century A.D. as the date of one or two bronzes and assigns a few others to the ninth century.[5] This is done at a time when a number of inscribed bronzes, especially of the

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 33, 34.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 14, note 2.
[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *op cit.*, p. 31.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 67.

Nāgapaṭṭiṇam hoard, are known. But recently, in *Lalit Kalā* No.7 an article has appeared dealing with some early bronzes assigned to the early Pallava period.

In regard to the identification of certain individual images there seems to persist notions which ought to have been changed with the knowledge of the subject that we now possess. For instance, even such a discerning author as Dr. Stella Kramrisch continues to identify the figure on Plate 150 of her recent book, *The Art of India* (The Phaidon Press Ltd., London, 1954) as 'Goddess playing cymbals' and explaining it further as 'the image is that of an attendant of the Goddess Kālī' in accordance with similar earlier identification of it. H. Zimmer's book *The Art of Indian Asia* (1954) also calls the figure Kālī (*vide* Fig. 422 of the book). In fact the image represents, neither any goddess nor any attendant of Goddess Kālī.[1] It is simply an image of the Śaiva woman saint Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, who is well known for her severe austerities and *bhajan* in order to have the beatific vision of Lord Siva's dancing.

Besides these, there is also the very curious view according to which the earliest bronzes of South India are not only likened to similar ones of the Gupta times from North India, but are also said to be inspired by the Gupta traditions of art. "The earliest known South Indian bronzes ..... are distintly Northern and Gupta in style ..... The supposedly Gupta bronzes bear little relation to the rockcut figures at Daḷavānūr, Mogalrājapuram and Mahābalipuram".[2] This view is apparently akin to the more well known view according to which a number of aspects of Indian art especially those of the examples of art belonging to a few centuries before and after Christ are claimed to have been inspired by traditions of Classical and Persian art. Both the views are correct in a limited way. True, in olden days civilized countries of the world have always been in touch with one another, as they are even now, and there was therefore mutual exchange not only of material goods but also of spiritual, religious and cultural ideas. But the borrowed material or idea is put to use according to the tastes and requirements of the country concerned. If this is true of the world, in a vast country like India where, though there is a basic unity of culture, there exist a number of superficial variations of it in the different regions, the impact of one such variant form of a particular region on that of another is naturally marked. But even this impact is seen in many instances to stop at a superficial level due to the assertion of the local genius. This is what has happened in the realm of Indian art too. Coming to the subject, though the earliest examples of South Indian bronzes are superficially akin to those of North India, they have unmistakable imprint of the regional traditions of art as will be shown below. In

[1] Dr. S. Kramrisch has since corrected this mistake, in a recent volume of *Artibus Asiae*. But Benjamin Rowland in his book *Art and Architecture of India*, Fig. 127A, calls it is again as Kālī.

[2] John Irwin, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

order to get at the basis as well as to understand the development of the artistic traditions of South India in so far as they pertain to the art of bronzes, in the light of the quite a considerable quantity of material available now, compared to that which was available earlier, it is necessary to examine the known examples of the art closely. This was proposed by the present writer to be done while doing the work of bringing up-to-date the *Catalogue of Hindu Metal Images in the Madras Museum* on which he has been engaged for some time now. This study, therefore, may be said to be preliminary to that and here it is proposed to trace the development of the art through the ages, touching upon the salient and characteristic points of a few select specimens belonging to each period.

Even now the number of accurately datable bronzes is very small, only a single specimen (Fig. 102) being added to the already known two[1]. But, with the publication of the Madras Museum Bulletin on the *Nāgapāṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, details of good many inscribed bronzes are known, together with their approximate dates based on the palaeography of their inscriptions. This is really of great help in fixing up broadly the stylistic variations of the several groups of bronzes belonging to various periods. Morever there is the vast number of bronzes acquired during the past thirty years and odd by the Madras Museum and those in the temples also, a study of which, in the light of facts known from the previous groups of bronzes, remarkably aids the tracing of the history of the art. Thus we have to depend mostly on the stylistic details of bronzes, corroborated partly by the inscriptions, for our conclusions regarding the dating of individual items. That this method is fraught with difficulties and it should therefore be employed with great caution was the considered opinion of Mr. Hadaway, which has been fully endorsed by Dr. Gravely and Mr. Ramachandran. As the passage on this matter is of interest it is quoted *in extenso* here. Mr. Hadaway says, "it is not a simple matter to compare the metal with the stone images of known date, and to deduct from similarities of treatment, details, or ornament, a corresponding similarity in age. It requires not only much intuitive artistic insight, but also, what is extremely rare a thorough knowledge both of stone working and metal working and the differences in technique of the two combined in a single individual. Certainly no one who has yet written on this subject has possessed this unique combination of knowledge. Taking into account the imitiative propensities of Indian craftsmen and their delight in working one material in a manner best suited to another, it is evident that copies of details of stone rendered in metal, or of metal rendered in stone are to them often a comparatively simple matter. It thus becomes evident that details of ornamental treatment are by no means a safe guide to age and we may find images of modern times with all the characteristic of work of the 10th century or earlier, in either stone or metal. It is a

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 34, 38, 112.

common mistake among modern critics to rely to the extant that they do on superficial similarities of treatment or detail . . . . . I do not hesitate to say that there have been no authentic data brought forward by which one could date one of these images with accuracy. Hitherto, the dating of the South Indian images has been fancy or speculation which could be considered in no other light than as guess-work pure and simple ".[1] To this stringent criticism in regard to the dating of South Indian bronzes on stylistic grounds by critics, the reply of the authors of the *Catalogue* is as follows :—

"This we believe to be as true as it is severe. But although we cannot claim to possess any of the special knowledge required to facilitate the enquiry, let alone its unique combination, we feel that it would be wrong to let pass the opportunity afforded by the comparative study of so unusually extensive a collection as that of the Madras Museum, without some enquiry into possible indications of date ".[2]

This was the view of the authors expressed more than a quarter of a century ago. Its soundness or otherwise should have been proved by now, in the light of the great strides that researches on this subject too have taken in the meantime and of the availability now of almost double the quantity of material.

That it has stood the test of time against the view of Mr. Hadaway will be evident in the following pages. With the knowledge of the subject that we now possess it may even be said that Mr. Hadaway was not quite correct in his statement that examples of the art of modern times might possess characteristics of those of ancient times and *vice versa*. It is contradictory to his own admirable estimate of the distinctiveness of the technique, quoted above (p. 4) by means of which, as has been already said, no two images with identical features albeit they are by the same hand, can be expected to be produced, unless the workmen resorted to copying which does not at all seem to have obtained in this field, as is known from the close examination of over twelve hundred specimens of bronzes. Even Mr. Hadaway's prescription of qualifications for a critic of the bronzes does not seem to be quite sound. For though 'intuitive artistic insight' is essential for estimating the merits and date of bronzes, the other qualifications he has stated, may not be absolutely essential, although any day persons with a unique combination of those qualificatians will be better than others who lack one or the other of them. To estimate the date of a South Indian bronze, or for that matter any work of Indian art, a critic should have a thorough knowledge of its archaeological setting and iconographic speciality. In other words, he should be completely familiar with the development of the formal snd decorative details of examples of figures and other

[1] Hadaway etc., *op. cit.* as quoted in the Madras Museum *Catalogue*, p. 21.
[2] *Catalogue*, p. 21.

motifs occurring in stone sculptures or paintings or coins belonging to various periods of a locality and should also be well versed in the *śilpa* texts.

With such an equipment a student of the subject will no doubt be able to judge the date of a bronze within reasonable limits of accuracy. Dr. Gravely and Mr. Ramachandran illustrate the same point in this passage: "To take a parallel from South Indian temple architecture: though corbels in the simple style characteristic of the Early Chola period have been freely used ever since, as they still are today (doubtless often for reasons of economy), they are not thereby invariably deprived of all value as indications of possible antiquity; and when considered in conjunction with the size and importance of the temple as well as with other decorative details they sometimes provide a most helpful clue to age, even though this cannot amount to proof." And we therefore beg to differ from Mr. Hadaway whose view is quoted in full above (pp. 7–8). Thus the importance of the evidence of style and workmanship of a piece of art, in regard to its date is also considerable; and in the case of bronzes we have to depend mostly on this evidence.

The authors of the *Catalogue* have based their classification of images into types on this basis. But they seem to have limited the scope of their examination to some of the details only, *e.g.*, the position of *chakra* and its embellishments in Vishṇu images, the *karaṇḍamakuṭa* in Śrī and Bhū, the *vājī-bandha* and the necklace. The last item has been examined by them in great detail, with special reference to the necklace of the Naṭeśas from Velāṅkaṇṇi and Tiruvālaṅgāḍu. The long necklace of the last bronze has apparently given them some trouble which we think, with due deference to the learned authors, is more imaginary than real. The long *hāra* can be seen in almost all the images of the various aspects of Śiva, in stone and metal, especially in those belonging to early periods It seems to be intended as a special characteristic of Śiva, and perhaps serves as a counterpart of the long *yajñopavīta* reaching to the right foot, of the Vishṇu bronzes. That their analysis requires further examination is also evident from the fact that they have passed by the difference in workmanship between the figure and its loose *padmāsana* of the same Naṭeśa. Apparently the *padmāsana* is very ornate and it seems to have been a substitute of late Vijayanagar times, for an earlier *āsana*.[1] It is therefore found necessary to examine every specimen of bronzes completely, from foot to crown, *pāda-ādi-keśānta*, both front and back as well as sides. It will be found that in several bronzes the details of their back view are more helpful in fixing their date than those of their front view. Hence the illustrations of back views in profusion. Here an attempt is made on these lines, to assess the worth of the bronzes from the points of view

1 *Śiva Naṭarāja, the Cosmic Dancer*, in *Roopa-Lekha* Vol. XXVI, 2, where attention has been drawn to this feature by the writer.

of archaeology and art. We do not for a moment think that we possess all the qualifications necessary for such a task. Nor do we lay claim to any originality, except perhaps for treating the subject, in a single book, in a chronological order. The indebtedness of ours to scholars who have worked in this field will be evident at every page.

The bronzes of South India, so far known, belong to various periods and localities and a best classification, for purposes of scientific study, of them would be according to periods with regional subdivisions under each period.

Amongst those of a particular period from a certain locality are found, side by side, also specimens of bronzes in a style quite different from that of the larger and more impressive pieces. They bear the stamp of workmanship of terracottas usually found in the temples of village deities. Specimens of bronzes in this style are met with in such temples even now. So one gets the impression that all such bronzes may have been the products of peasant-artists. This is, to some extent, true. But a number of images of this type *e.g.*, (Fig. 359) have been found along with beautiful bronzes. The purpose underlyning the making of these pieces remains to be known. The iconographic details of several of them are so correct to the texts, that there is very little doubt about the fact that they were also made by the same *sthapati* who made the larger icons. Bronzes of this type are of interest on account of their style, technique, decorative details and other features. In short they embody traditions of an age-old and vigorous school of art which seems to have specialised in modelling clay rather than wax which went into the making of bronzes. It is supported by the fact that examples in this style are, as a rule small, none of them being taller than a foot or so. So, these are dealt with separately.

EARLIEST BRONZES

In the earliest phase of Indian Culture, namely Harappa Culture, dated to about 2000 B.C., fine arts including casting of bronze sculptures was in vogue and "even at this period the *cire perdue* method of casting was skilfully practised on Indian soil, as may be seen from the small bull . . . . and the well-known figure of a nude dancing girl from the same site".[1] After this period, bronzes come to light, in North India only from about the 2nd century A. D. *i.e.*, Kushan period *e.g.*, the decorative figures in the round on the lid and the bas-reliefs on the receptacle of the Kanishka casket from Shāh-jī-kī-Dherī.[2] More and more specimens begin to appear from a still later period and the

[1] John Irwin, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[2] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. XXIV, Fig. 89.

figures of the Buddha from various sites in Gandhāra are the earliest of their kind.[1] Subsequent history of the art of bronzes in the North is very interesting because though it reached the zenith of its development during the Gupta period, yet it continued to show vigour and was widely practised during the Pala and Sena periods also, and was responsible for inspiring the bronze workers of Nepal and Tibet; and there its impress is unmistakably seen in the early bronzes and its spirit continues to linger in the modern ones also. But the examples of North Indian bronzes, it must be noted, have a distinctive 'flavour', if this term is permitted to be used, which is quite different from that of bronzes of South India the history of which seems to date from a far more ancient period, as is probably borne out by the following.

Till recently, the existence of 'Bronze Age' in South India was not recognised by scholars of Indian archæology. But the excavations of Hyderabad have given a lie to this as they resulted in the discovery of a few significant bronze implements too, including weapons of war[2]. This evidence proves beyond doubt that the people of this part also knew, from prehistoric times — how long ago is, however, not precisely known — the science of metallurgy as well as the art of making useful things out of refined metal and alloy of metals. Secondly amongst the antiquities from the Iron Age cremation site of Adichanallur in the Tirunelveli District of Madras State, there are a number of bronze articles which are very interesting in more than one way. Mr. A. Rea, the excavator of the site says: "There are no implements or weapons in bronze, all articles in this metal being vessels of varied shape, personal ornaments, such as rings, bangles and bracelets or ornaments which have been attached to the bases and lids of vases, such as buffaloes with wide curved horns. The domestic animals represented in bronze are the buffalo, goat or sheep and cock; and the wild animals tiger, antelope and elephant. There are also representations of flying birds. There are sieves in bronze in the form of perforated cups fitted into small basins, the metal of these cups being extremely thin, and the basins only a little thicker. The perforations in the cup are in the form of dots arranged in a variety of designs, chiefly concentric circles around the bottom, and concentric semi-circles sometimes interlacing around the rim."[3] Such a rare group of objects naturally evoked

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 20, No. 126. The date (3rd–4th century A.D.) given to it seems well-founded and the date of 1st–2nd century A. D. given to "the early small figures from Taxila" by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran, (*Nāgapaṭṭinam and other Buddhist Bronzes, Author's Preface*, p. vi), if he means by 'the figures from Taxila' the same ones from 'various sites in Gandhāra' referred to by Mr. Irwin, cannot be accepted. The attempt of Mr. John Irwin (p. 66) to relate it to the Buddha figures from Dhanesar Khera, on the basis of 'particularly in treatment of drapery' is in vain. For, between them, there is apparently a vast difference both in conception and execution.

[2] *Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of H. E. H. The Nizam's Dominions* for 1937–40 (Calcutta, 1942), pp. 22–24, quoted in the article on *Copper Hoards from the Gangetic Basin and a Review of the Problem*, in Ancient India, No. 7, pp. 20–39.

[3] A. Rea, *Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities from Adichanallur and Perumbair*, p. 4.

admiration from the discoverer who goes into raptures, rightly, we think, over the skill of the ancient people (apparently of South India) in working bronze thus, "the people of those days appear to have been skilful in moulding pottery, in casting or working metals ..... The bronzes exhibit a high degree of skill in workmanship and manipulation of the metal, while the same may be said of the iron implements."[1]

But unfortunately as yet no satisfactory date has been assigned to these antiquities. However, to us there seems to be a similarity of conception of design and technique between the lids from Adichanallur and the lid of the Kanishka casket (about 2nd century A.D.) from Shāh-jī-kī-Dherī, referred to above (p. 10), in spite of the fact that there is a lot of difference between them; the Kanishkha casket is realistic and refined while the Adichanallur specimens are schematic and probably symbolic. Can this be taken to give us any idea of comparative dates between these?

Fig. 1 More interesting than these bronze lids is the crude figurine of a goddess (?)[2] also of bronze,[3] found here. But, of course, it has not come from scientifically excavated stratum and hence its date too is doubtful. Yet it is true that its style is very much akin to that of many a terra-cotta figurine belonging to the last centuries B. C. Although this cannot, however, be taken as the basis for purposes of dating, nevertheless there is a possibility, however remote it may be, of its serving as a clue to it. In the present context, the importance of this figurine lies in the fact that the people had also attempted making of bronze images of (?) deities.

Fig. 2 Before proceeding further, another important example of bronze work which formed one of a group of bowls found amongst the antiquities of Iron Age burial sites in the Nilgiris. The date of this is also puzzling. Mr. Breeks the discoverer of this says about this vase, "At 1, a beautiful bronze vase (No. XLIV) inverted. It is very solid, in shape a long oval, on a stand, and is chased outside and in, the centre pattern inside representing the lotus or *Padma*. The ornament is done by hand, and shows slight irregularities, but the workmanship is excellent."[4] Recently Dr. A. Aiyappan, had occasion to examine it in the context of a brief review of the culture of the Toḍas of Nilgiris.[5] The learned author has pointed out the close similarity of design and style that exists between this bowl and a gold bowl from Ur graves dated to about 2500 B. C. and

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[2] It has not been catalogued by A. Rea and it is exhibited in the Madras Museum with a label mentioning that it is from Adichanallur.

[3] O.C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Fig. 17.

[4] J. W. Breeks, *An Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilgiris*, India Office, London (1873), p. 74, Pl. XLI, Fig. a, and Pl. XLII, Fig. a.

[5] *Possible Sumerian Survivals in Toḍa Ritual*. Introduction, p. x, Fig. 1.

has rightly not, on that account, come to any conclusions on the date of the former. But to examine its designs closely and compare them with their probable models or precursors or descendants does not seem to be without advantage though it be merely an iota. The bowl has a full-blown lily design with a lily-stalk carrying buds on either side at its bottom inside, and a full blown lotus design at the bottom outside. There are also lotus petal designs carved on the sides on its exterior. The workmanship of these patterns when compared with that of lotus and lily patterns occurring in sculptures from Jaggayyapeṭa and those of the earliest phase of Amarāvatī will be found to reveal a remarkable affinity between them, in design and delineation. The facts that the naturalism of these designs is missing from similar designs of later periods and that there is especially the paucity of later-day bronze works with designs characterised by the same features, afford some sort of a basis for arriving at a tentative dating of the bowl in question. At any rate, the somewhat identical style between the designs of this bowl and those of the earliest sculptures of South India, may be taken to suggest that they are examples of works of art of common traditions; and even if the bowl be taken to be later than the sculptures, it does not seem to be far removed from them.[1]

Another group of objects that may be examined here are the cast coins of copper. They may not be strictly relevant to the present context. But, as they are also products of similar technology and have designs of workmanship similar to those of sculptures in bronze with which we are concerned most here, they may be considered to have also a bearing on the subject. A great majority of them are reported to have been found in places in the neighbourhood of Madura; while some others belong to various other places of the ancient Pāṇḍyan territory. They are, therefore, said to be issues of the Pāṇḍyan dynasty of hoary antiquity. The date of the coins is, however, impossible to be fixed with any amount of certainty as none of them have any legends on them; nor have they been found in association with any datable objects. Here, therefore, there is the necessity to have recourse to the style in which the designs on them are executed, for purposes of arriving at a reasonable date for the coins. Unlike in the case of the Nilgiri bronze bowl and the Adichanallur bronzes discussed above, where even an approximate dating of them is beset with difficulties, the large number of designs on these coins being similar to the designs found on some classes of coins of the Sātavāhana dynasty of the Andhra country of more or less known date, the evidence afforded by these coins is really valuable. There are coins with designs such as the *ashṭa-maṅgaḷa* (mirror, full-vase, *svastika* etc.) in combination with figures of elephants; others with Fig. 3

[1] Regarding the probable date of the Nilgiris Antiquities in general Mr. G. N. Das of the Deccan College Research Institute, Poona, has after a thorough and careful examination of a variety of factors has come to almost the same conclusion independently.

designs of *chaitya*; and yet others with figures of tree-in-railing and horse.[1] A close study of these designs will reveal a remarkable identity of workmanship between them and those of the coins of the Sātavāhana kings.[2] It must be stated here that such a highly-finished symbols and designs are characteristic not only of coins of the early centuries of the Christian era but also of sculptures of the same period; and these do not recur either in the same manner in which they are delineated here or in a similar context, in the subsequent periods. If this is accepted then these coins too may be said to belong to that early period. This deduction which is of course quite tentative and subject to correction in the light of sufficiently valid future researches, gives a clue regarding the stage of development of the art of working in metal at such an early period. The elephants of the coins are fine examples of bas-relief works and compare favourably with
Fig. 4 even such magnificent representation as the elephant Nalagiri in the oft-illustrated Nalagiri medallion from Amarāvatī of the 2nd century A. D. Such high quality metal works, coming as they do from important centres of Tamil-nāḍ, show clearly not only the capacity of the coin-makers but also indicate, in an unmistakable fashion, the great potentialities of the metal-workers of South India who, in the subsequent periods, produced outstanding specimens of bronzes.

ĀNDHRA–PALLAVA BRONZES

Thus it is evident that the history of the art of bronzes of South India dates back to a very ancient period although precisely dated specimens of great antiquity have not as yet been known. All along we have been dealing with examples of metal work not exactly of the order of metal figures, but allied to them only in certain respects. Hereafter we will deal mainly with the latter class of figures. Even here, except in a few instances, the dating is a problem; but, as mentioned above, an earnest attempt is made to solve this with the help of the few extant datable examples of bronzes and with the help of a close study of the evolution of the style in which the bronzes of the various periods are done. This requires a close study of the development of the various details of representations of one and the same theme or subject through the ages. The earliest of this category of bronzes are undoubtedly those from Buddhapāḍ[3] and Amarāvatī[4]. From the latter place only four fragmentary bronzes were obtained. But the number of

[1] For some of these coins see *Transactions of the Archæological Society of South India*, I (1955), Pl. 3, Figs. 16, 17, 17 A, and 17 B.

[2] Compare the elephant of the coin of the king Āpīlaka, in *Early History of the Andhra Country* by K. Gopalachari, pp. 39–41, Pl. IV, Fig. 2.

[3] J. Boswell, *Indian Antiquary*, 1, p. 153; R. Sewell, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for 1895, pp. 617–37, with 4 plates.

[4] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–60, Pl. XXII, Figs. 1–4.

bronzes found at the former place was large and they included specimens of votive *stūpas* also. It will be useful to reproduce here the statement of Mr. Boswell who noticed these bronzes for the first time. He says: "There are also a number of copper Buddhist figures in the Library at Bezwada. These were found buried at Buddhāvani in the Repalli Taluqua — a place which retains traces of its origin in its name. There are three images of Buddha, one seated under a triple umbrella,[1] two standing with the head surrounded by a wheel or circle.[2] There are also two copper shrines[3] of which the images are wanting. Besides these, there are a number of copper images of the Buddhist saints, varying in size from one to two feet in height. These are beautifully executed, and might bear comparison with Grecian or Roman figures for symmetry and design. Most of the figures have the caste thread,[4] and the folds of the dresses are very gracefully represented. Each figure formerly stood on a pedestal of its own, but I am informed that, as these pedestals bore certain characters, probably the names of the saints, they were sent to Madras to be deciphered. They have never, however, been returned. I presume they are in the Government Central Museum.[5] I would recommend bringing the figures and these pedestals together again. Each figure has a spike below the feet to fit into the pedestal. The features are finely cut, the hair is woolly, and the holes of the ears unnaturally extended and pendant. In one of the images the eyes are of silver. The positions are very natural, easy, and graceful."[6] This was written in 1870 and published in 1872. In 1895, Mr. Sewell, while noticing a few images of this find says: "The images noted by Mr. Boswell consisted of entire figures, and I saw none but these when first stationed at Bezwada early in 1875. One day, however, I was informed that in the workshops of the Public Works Department at that place there were a number of broken pieces of bronze lying about ..... I found that they consisted of specimens similar to those already at the little museum or library. This led to a search being made and in the end I succeeded in rescuing several baskets full of images, heads, arms, feet, dagobas, bases, and other fragments, mostly belonging to the Buddhist period, all of which had for some years lain condemned as old and useless metal. It was said that they had formed part of the Buddhapāḍ find, and they were placed by me in the library along with the others. In 1879, I brought to England the pieces forming the present collection — a

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1 Obviously not a correct description as only a Jain Tīrthaṅkara figure has a triple umbrella.

2 This probably means the curls of hair on the head of the Buddha figures.

3 Probably votive *stūpas*.

4 This is only the thick hem of the upper garment that is seen across the body of the figures, not the caste-thread *(yajñopavīta)*.

5 Whereabouts of these, even to this day, are unknown. It is very unfortunate indeed. For, if they, as has been mentioned, bore inscriptions, their value, especially for purposes of dating would be immense. Cf. *J.R.A.S.* for 1895, p. 618, for similar opinion of R. Sewell.

6 J. Boswell, *loc. cit.*

small fraction of those which I had rescued."[1] These long quotations are intended to show not only the large number of bronzes found at Buddhapāḍ but also their variety, which prove unmistakably the floruishing nature of the art at the time these bronzes were made. It is not known what became of the bronzes left over at Bezwada by Mr. Sewell. Fortunately the bronzes which he carried to England were noticed by him with illustrations.

The affinity of the style of those bronzes to the styles in which the standing Buddha in the Boston Museum, illustrated by A. K. Coomaraswamy in Fig. 159 in his *H. I. I. A.*, the seated Buddha in the Colombo Museum (*ibid.*, Fig. 296), and the standing Buddha from Don-duong, (*ibid.*, Fig. 342), is so close as to suggest that their traditions had a common origin. Dr. Coomaraswamy's dates for them are 5th century, 5th or 6th century and 3rd century respectively. On the analogy of the Boston and Buddhapāḍ bronzes,[2] Mr. T. N. Ramachandran has dated the four bronzes from Amarāvatī between 3rd and 6th centuries A.D. When Mr. John Irwin declarss the Āndhra images as 'supposedly Gupta',[3] he may be taken to agree to their dates being somewhere between 4th and 7th centuries A. D. This is the consensus of opinion of scholars regarding the date of the bronzes under discussion. They may, therefore, be said to belong to a date earlier than 600 A.D. Only rarely examples of bronzes belonging to subsequent periods were obtained from this area, the bulk of South Indian bronzes of later periods hailing from Tamilnāḍ, and that too from the Choḷa territory. The reason for the paucity of bronzes from Āndhradeśa of later periods is not known. Obviously there was lack of popular and royal patronage to this art then. This fact raises the question, namely, who was responsible for the large number of early bronzes ?

According to South Indian history, the Āndhras were ruling in the Kṛishṇā valley till the early decades of the 3rd century A.D. Then the region became a bone of contention between a number of royal dynasties such as the Ikshvākus of Nāgārjunakōṇḍa, the Bṛihatphalāyanas and the Śālaṅkāyanas. But that the region comprising the modern Nellore, Guntur and Bellary districts was under the rule of the dynasty called the Pallavas during the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries is borne out by a few significant copper-plate inscriptions obtained from such places as Mayidavōlu, Hirahaḍahalli, Omgōḍu and Darśi.[4] The kings and queens who issued these grants are said to have had their capital at Kāñchīpuram. Surprisingly enough no inscription of any of these early royal personages has been known from places in and around the present Kāñchī, although a majority of

[1] R. Sewell, *op. cit.*, pp. 618–19.
[2] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–60.
[3] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 67.
[4] R. Gopalan, *The Pallavas*; D. C. Sircar, *The Successors of the Sātavāhanas in the Lower Deccan*, Chap. VI.

them refer to it as the capital of the kings. Some of the *birudas* of the kings seem to be in the Telugu language. Owing to these and other reasons, this dynasty is said to have had its original home in Āndhradeśa. A great majority of the members of this dynasty were followers of Brāhmanism. Some of the inscriptions give information about the grants of lands made by the kings or queens to temples dedicated to deities like Vishṇu.[1] Thus temple worship, like the earlier *stūpa* worship, was actively encouraged by the members of this dynasty. Some of its members are, however, said to have had leanings towards Buddhism also. When the rituals in the Brāhmanical temples became elaborate, the Buddhist shrines too probably followed suit. One of the essential requisites of worship was perhaps images that could be handled easily and kept pure and bright by cleaning and washing them everyday. Images in stone were not quite convenient for this practice. Hence the necessity for making images in bronze. Talent and skill in making bronzes though, as mentioned above, inherent in the artisans of this part of India, required sufficient patronage and a congenial atmosphere to flower. Members of this early Pallava dynasty being accustomed to this method of worship may be said to have provided the necessary fillip to the art of making bronzes. Those members of the dynasty with Buddhist leanings may have been responsible for the creation of the vast number of bronzes in question. Even if they cannot be credited with this that they were directly responsible for this, yet there is little doubt that during the period to which the bronzes are assigned unanimously by all, it was this dynasty that seems to have had sway over a wide area including not only a part of the Āndhradeśa but also the capital of the sātavāhana kings, namely Dhānyakaṭaka, and therefore these bronzes may legitimately be said to be products of the period when this dynasty reigned supreme here. As has been mentioned already, this early dynasty had greater connections with the Āndhradeśa than with the Tamilnāḍ proper. The members of this dynasty may therefore be called, for the sake of convenience, the Āndhra-Pallavas. Accordingly bronzes under discussion may also be called the Āndhra-Pallava bronzes.

The examples of bronzes of the Āndhra-Pallava period that are available for study, are the four fragmentary ones from Amrāvatī and the three complete figures, three heads and a pedestal from Buddhapāḍ (or Buddhāvani) illustrated on plates 1 and 2 accompanying the article by Mr. R. Sewell referred to above.[2] Most of them are images of the Buddha. On account of the technique in which they are done, each is distinctly different from the other. From the manner in which the drapery is worked, they can be divided into three groups namely, the headless figure[3] from Amarāvatī showing the garment as folded, the folds being suggested by thick bulging out schematic Fig. 5

[1] *E.I.* Vol. VIII, pp. 143 ff.
[2] *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, for 1895, pp. 618 ff.
[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 3.

lines; the damaged Buddha[1] (Fig. 6) also from Amarāvatī of which the drapery is shown with folds suggested by incised parallel lines; and the rest[2] (Figs. 7, 8, 9) of which the clothes, which are diaphanous in character, cling to the body. Apparently they are not products of a single hand; nor do all of them belong to the same age. These differences in treatment of drapery coupled with the distinct difference of artistic qualities of the bronzes give a clue to settle, more or less definitely, the date of each of them and their chronological order. Though the headless bronze figure (Fig. 5) from Amarāvatī has the *saṅghāṭi* covering the body, leaving right shoulder bare, and has wave-like lines and folds arranged as in the stone Buddhas from Mathurā, Amarāvatī, and Anurādhapura[3], its affinities to the Buddhas from Amarāvatī[4] Nāgārjunakoṇḍa[5] and Vidyādharapuram,[6] are closer than to the others not merely in the workmanship of the drapery but in all other respects too. Like the latter, this figure is erect, fully frontal in view, and rigid in posture. Added to these, its back is somewhat flat like its counterparts. The only differences between them relate to material and size. Thus artistically this figure may be said to be archaic while the other bronzes are not only less archaic but also show signs of classical worksmanship. Supposing, it is argued, that for purposes of dating, only a comparison between sculptures in the same material would be more valid than between works in different materials, such a thing is also possible here. Except for the lack of head, the bronze in question is more or less identical in all respects with the bronze Buddha from Don-duong, Campā, belonging to the Museum of E.F.E.O. at Hanoi.[7] Only difference that may be observed between them is that in the Campā image the lines of the drapery are not so thick as they are in the Amarāvatī specimen and that this feature of the former is more akin to that of the marble Buddhas from Amarāvatī etc., referred to above. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy assigns the marble Buddhas from Amarāvatī to the end of 'second or very early third century A.D.'[8] and the Campā bronze to the third century A.D.[9] Here, owing to the fact that examples of bronzes have been found to be at least a century later than the stone sculptures of comparable style, the Campā bronze may be slightly later, and it may

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[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 2.

[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXII, Figs. 1, 4; R. Sewell, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, Figs. 1–3.

[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

[4] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Figs. 138, 139.

[5] A. H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl. VIb; P. R. Srinivasan, *Budddhist Stūpas and Images* in *The Story of Buddhism with special reference to South India*, Fig. 5; and T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa* (1938), Pl. XIV A.

[6] P. R. Srinivasan, *op. cit.*, Fig. 6.

[7] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 197, Fig. 342.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71, 239.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 252.

therefore, be assigned, say, to the beginning of the 4th century.[1] Allowing a margin of about half a century between this and the Amarāvatī bronze under study the latter may be assigned to the second half of the 4th century A.D.

To a slightly later period, then, should belong the next bronze also from Amarāvatī.[2] Not only the drapery but its slightly evolved modelling also is indicative of this date. Though broken below the stomach, the absence of the curvature of the right side here, which is conspicuous by its presence in the bronzes discussed above, is clearly seen. There are also the prominent *ushṇīsha* and curls of hair. The facial features suggest a matter-of-fact character rather than contemplation. The *abhaya* pose of the right hand is clearly a departure from the *vyākhyāna-mudrā* of the previous two bronzes. On the whole though its style, including the *samabhaṅga* posture, generally corresponds to that of the other two, the trends of deviation are more marked here. On account of these, this may be assigned to about 400 A.D.[3] In view of the striking similarity that exists between this and the seated Buddha of the Colombo Museum, the latter may be dated to the same period.[4] The head from Amarāvatī with prominent *ushṇīsha* showing curls in the shape of globules[5] shows features very much akin to those of the above figure and may dated to about the same period. The apparently unrefined manner of treatment of this head does not seem to approach anywhere near the marvellous bronze from Sultanganj. Hence Mr. T. N. Ramachandran's categorical statement, "Head remarkably similar to Sultanganj Gupta Buddha. Date 5th-6th century A.D." is difficult to appreciate. Fig. 6 Fig. 7

Next in point of time comes the bronze[6] from Buddhapāḍ. Here, the drapery does not clearly show the lines as in the above example, but that it is now slightly lighter than the drapery of the above mentioned figures is easily seen from the way the depression around the waist is indicated. From now onwards it becomes an invariable feature in the bronzes representing the Buddha. Further, in this bronze the end of the upper garment that hangs down from the left arm shows a slight wave, indicating the flow of the cloth, whereas till the last example it hangs down in a straight line. Here, however, the tradition of depicting the Buddha in *sama-bhaṅga* posture is continued. Other significant improvements in the details noticed here are the slanting position of the Fig. 8

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[1] Dr. Coomaraswamy doubts if it may be 'Indian or Ceylon' in origin. Owing to its close similarity to the Amarāvatī marble and bronze Buddhas, most probably it too hails from the Kṛishṇā valley.

[2] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 59, where instead of a definite statement in the matter the author says, 'The cranial protuberance (*ushnīsha*) is as in Gupta, Buddhapāḍ, Boston specimens.....'

[4] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Fig. 296.

[5] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 1.

[6] R. Sewell, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, Fig. 3.

abhaya-hasta, the *āhūya-varada* pose of the left hand, slightly swollen up shoulder suggesting inherent power and the subdued treatment of the hair and the *ushṇīsha* on the head. More interesting than these is the detail namely the *ūrṇā* on the forehead. This is seen for the first time but is only sketchy. Above all the facial features of this bronze suggest amazement. These changes indicate the gradual development of the style of art from archaic to classical. This bronze may be dated to early 5th century A.D.

Fig. 9 This leads on to the bronze Buddha from Amarāvatī[1]. Here, the drapery has become definitely transparent, the depression around the waist is more pronounced, the hanging end of the upper garment is worked wave-like throughout and its end, going across the body like a *yajñopavīta* has become thick and prominent. In this figure one sees for the first time the right hand in *varada-mudrā* while the left hand holds the ends of the upper garment in a bunch. Here too, the hair and the protuberance are subdued. The face indicates complete absorption in thinking and the treatment of the eyelids suggest a slight down-cast countenance. The portion upto the chest is powerfully rendered while below it, the portion is slightly disproportionate and defective in modelling, though slender and smooth. Almost all the examples of the art examined above are somewhat flat behind while here we have a powerfully, though slightly imperfectly, represented specimen fully in the round. It may be mentioned in passing that the style in which the head and the shoulder are treated can be easily understood to be the precursor of some of the earliest examples of stone sculpture of Tamilnāḍ of a much later period. It is assigned to the 6th century A.D. by the learned scholar Mr. T. N. Ramachandran,[2] but it may be placed round about 500 A.D.

Fig. 10 An examination of the Buddhapāḍ bronze[3] will show its position next to the above with a date of about the early 6th-century A.D. That this bronze is slightly more evolved than the previous one from Amarāvatī is easily seen from the manner of treatment of the head, namely its comparatively greater down-cast posture and the more refined workmanship of the body. However, in general, the face has not been properly modelled and chiselled.

It is tempting to include here, immediately after the above bronze, the beautiful bronze Buddha[4] now in the Boston Museum. For, in all respects it appears to be a perfect specimen of the model of which the bronzes from Amarāvatī and Buddhapāḍ discussed above are only earlier, and therefore less perfect, examples. But Dr. Coomara-

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[3] R. Sewell, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, Fig. 1.
[4] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Fig. 159.

swamy says that "the typically Gupta bronze of figure 159 (*i.e.*, the Buddha in question) said to have been found in Burma, is probably of Indian origin."[1] From such characteristics as the prominent *ūrṇā*, chubby and smiling features of the face, the thick *yajñopavīta*-like end of the upper garment, the powerful rendering of the bust and the slender but more gracefull modelling which are distinctive of the Āndhra-Pallava bronzes discussed above, and which are different from the workmanship of the same details found in north Indian bronzes of this kind, it is quite possible that this bronze belongs to India and that too probably to a place in the Kṛishṇā valley. The treatment of the eyes, and of the drapery especially, supports our hypothesis, in spite of the similarity observed in the delineation of the curls and the fingers of this and the Sultanganj Buddha, which is but a concomitant factor found nearly in all the representations of a particular theme, belonging to the same period. Being the product of a time when all over India there was a great cultural awakening, it naturally compares well with the best bronzes produced in North India. This bronze may be said to be superior, artistically in certain respects, to the best Gupta masterpieces like the Sultanganj colossus. For, unlike the latter which is gigantic in size and in which the treatment of the drapery is somewhat ornate, factors which cannot be said to be absolutely classical, the details of the Buddha under discussion is marked by a rare restraint in the treatment of all its details, a *sine qua non* of a classical work, the charm of which is enhanced by the slightly emphasised smile. The greaceful movement of the figure is remarkably suggested by the appropriate *ābhaṅga* pose which, with but a slight inclination to the proper right, makes it a superb work of art. A prominent *ūrṇā* is met with in this figure, which was absent from the other figures examined so far except the Buddhapāḍ one but which becomes an invariable feature of the bronze Buddhas of the subsequent periods. This bronze may therefore be dated to about the end of the 5th century A.D.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, the last bronze showing a complete Buddha from Bhaddhapāḍ[2] is apparently later than the above as its style is markedly advanced. There is an emphasis here on rythmic sway which is beautifully shown by a greater flexion of the body. The *bhaṅga* here gives one illusion that the figure is in *tribhaṅga*. The flowing drapery, as if wafted by a gentle breeze, accentuates this illusion, making it almost a reality. The hair and the *ushṇīsha* are not clearly seen. But the fully down-cast face and its sharp features are in contrast to those of the above figure. The long nose and the wide eyes and the concave ears suggest that the *sthapati* is attempting here an experiment at depicting a new mode of modelling. The shoulder is still broad but it has become here completely fused with Fig. 11

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 171.
[2] R. Sewell, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, Fig. 2.

the rest of the body, the slender and soft treatment of which makes the figure somewhat effeminate. The right arm is in *varada* pose while the hand portion of the left arm is broken and missing. The *ūrṇā* is prominent. The legs here are also missing. This bronze may be assigned to the first half of the 6th century A.D.

Of the three heads from Bhuddhapāḍ[1] the first is earlier than the other two. Here the hair and the *ushṇīsha* are done in the traditional way; the eyes are shown by petal-like depressions; the eye-brows are indicated by an incised curve; and the nose is long, straight and prominent. It may belong therefore to the middle of the 6th century A.D.

To a slightly later period may be assigned the head with a portion of the right shoulder. The workmanship of the shoulder is rather crude. The absence of curls on the head but the presence of fragments on it of a turban-like headdress suggests that it is the head of a Bodhisattva. The treatment of the face is slightly more advanced than that of the above head.

The last head of this series is very interesting both for its developed modelling and for certain innovations noticeable in the rendering of some of the features which suggest majesty rather than thoughtful character. The curls are more broad and pronounced than those of the other bronzes examined above. Most interesting of the details is the *ushṇīsha* which seems to have been done with a central portion shaped like a bud which is separated by a depression from the lower portion worked like inverted petals of a flower. This is the first instance of this innovation which had a chequered development in the subsequent periods. On account of these details, this head may be assigned to the end of the 6th century A.D.

Of the Buddhapāḍ bronzes described by Mr. Sewell, the arms illustrated on Pl. 2. and the votive *stūpa* of Pl. 3, may be noticed now. Among the arms, there are appa-
Fig. 12 rently two or three groups. The three arms with hands in *vyākhyāna-mudrā* obviously broken off from three standing Buddha bronzes of the Campā Buddha type discussed above (p. 18) and hence can be imagined to be of great beauty, are distinctly earlier than the *lola*-cum-*varada* type of hands of Figs. 1 and 3 of Pl. 3 of Mr. Sewell's paper. The hand of Fig. 2 of the same plate being in the *abhaya* pose with a slight tilt to the right as in the case of the hand of the Buddha (Fig. 11) noticed above, belongs to the same period which lies in between the dates of the other two groups of arms.

Fig. 13 The votive *stūpa* too is interesting from the point of view of style which is simple and beautiful. But here we find that the miniature *stūpa* type with which we are familiar in the *stūpa*-slabs of Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Goli, has

[1] *Ibid.*, Figs. 1, 2, 3.

been much modified. Unlike the *stūpa*-slabs, there is here the inverted stepped pyramid-like *harmikā*, surmounting a high cubical *grīva*. Below it is the *aṇḍa* which is almost a globe. It is found placed on a cylindrical *medhi* which is wider at both ends. The *aṇḍa* moreover, seems to be supported by a thin cup-shaped design. The prototypes of this are the monolithic *stūpas* found at Śaṅkārām and the beautiful relic caskets of silver, gold and copper and votive *stūpas* of marble found in the excavations at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa by Mr. A. H. Longhurst.[1] This may, therefore, be assigned to about the 6th century A. D. From the point of view of the evolution of the Buddhist worship, at least in so far as South India is concerned, this affords a clue to the antiquity of the practice of making votive *stūpas* and presenting them to the Buddhist temples as evidenced by a number of examples from Nāgāpaṭṭiṇam,[2] of medieval times.

The pedestal which is obviously a *padmāsana* over a cylindrical base with three eyes for 'fastening the figure securely in its place' is also interesting. To begin with, figures representing the Buddha seem to have been provided with only a simple pedestal *e.g.*, the two large marble Buddhas (*c.* 200 A. D.) from Amarāvatī[3]. Even in the bas-reliefs of Amarāvatī[4] (*c.* 200 A.D.) and Goli[5] (*c.* 220 A.D.) where the Buddha is represented, no pedestal is in evidence. But in one of the latest bas-reliefs (*c.* 250 A.D.) from Amarāvatī[6] there is a full-blown lotus under each foot of the Buddha. About the middle of the 3rd century A. D. when a number of large Buddhas were made for installing in the *Buddha-gṛihas* at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, the *sthapatis* seem to have provided them each with only a single *padmāsana*[7]. This was the first time, at least so far as South India was concerned, that this *motif* appeared in this context. It was employed in this manner probably to satisfy the demands of the developed theology of the Mahāyāna Buddhism. A beautiful representation of such an *āsana* which once supported a Buddha is illustrated in Pl. XIV A of Mr. T. N. Ramachandran's book *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa* (1938). This lotus *āsana* alone was used for such figures for some time. And the introduction of a support for the lotus in the shape of the cylindrical portion of the pedestal in question is therefore a later innovation. There is no means now to know as to when actually this new element was added to the unit of an icon. But the finish of the pedestal under discussion being very much similar to that of the Fig. 14

[1] *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl. XVI a, b, c, and Pl. XVII b, c, d, e, f.

[2] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–58.

[3] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Figs. 137, 138.

[4] J. Burgess, *The Buddhist Stūpas of Amarāvatī and Jaggayyapeṭa*, Pl. XLVI (1), XLVIII (2); C. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvatī Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum*, Pl. LXII, Figs. 1, 2; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Fig. 141.

[5] T. N. Ramachandran, *Buddhist Sculptures from a Stūpa near Goli Village, Guntur District*, Pls. II, III.

[6] C. Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. LXIII, Fig. 2:b.

[7] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, (1938), Pl. XIV A.

bronzes examined above, dated to about the 6th century, it may also be assigned to the same age. That it is one of the earliest of its kind is evident from the fact that the outermost series of petals of the lotus which curve down to give it the shape of a double-lotus in the later examples, is absent from here, and that the plain cylindrical support follows the circular shape of the lotus above, instead of becoming a *bhadrāsana* of square or rectangualr form as in the case of the later-day bronzes.

The bronzes examined above are all Buddhist and no bronze icons of other religions or bronzes of secular themes, belonging to this Āndhra-Pallava period, have been met with. As almost all of them are Buddha images, a study of the evolution of the icon from the point of view of art and iconography has been comparatively easy. The distinctive characteristics of these bronzes have also been noted under each item, which undoubtedly were due to the genius of the *sthapatis* of the Kṛishṇā valley. No doubt Buddhism originated in Magadha and spread to other parts of India. But the popularisation of the religion was done not by a mass of Buddhists migrating from the north to other regions. Only a handful of sincere, devoted, and highly capable missionaries carried the message of the Master to the nooks and corners of India. Wherever they went, by means of their powerful personalities and sincerity of purpose, they could exert a considerable influence on the people of the locality who became followers of the faith.

In course of time, the Buddhist settlements in the various localities were peopled mostly by monks and nuns hailing from the same localities, and the population consisting of north Indians, afterwards, should have become merely a small fraction of the inmates. Moreover, the number of such religious men known definitely to have come from Magadha or North India was probably small. It is well known that only after the lapse of considerable time that the propagators of the religions, especially of Buddhism, began to use works of art as an instrument for propagating the religion. When this idea caught the imagination of the heads of the different regional churches, they being themselves, as mentioned above, men of the localities, entrusted the work of making *stūpas* and sculptures to the reputed *śreṇi* or guild of *sthapatis* of the locality or of the neighbouring locality. They themselves probably stopped after giving exhaustive schedule of the various themes and details that should enter into the projected schemes. And it was those *sthapatis*, whatever their faith was, that carved in stone or bronze the stories and *motifs* according to the technical and artistic traditions of their schools. Even in such cases where there is evidence to show that the services of expert sculptors and architects of other kingdoms or regions were requisitioned to meet the great demand of a particular region, the number of such experts should necessarily have been small, and they too must have depended upon the local schools for co-operation in their

endeavour, which was perhaps readily forthcoming on account of the greatness of the cause. Under such circumstances, the works of the experts probably consisted of drawing out the plans, sketching the elevations and indicating, on broad lines, the position of the various details of either a huge structure like a *stūpa* or a minor element of a work of art like a Buddha sculpture. After these works had reached an advanced stage of construction, the experts gave a finishing touch here and another there. Had it not been so, there would not be so much of difference in details in the execution of one and the same theme *e.g.*, a *stūpa* in different localities. Thus it is easy to understand the great role played by the local *sthapatis* and when there were amongst them capable men there was hardly any necessity for the local people to get experts from other places.

The above argument, though appears to be subjective, has been advanced on the basis of sufficient knowledge about the practice in these matters that obtains even now in South India where the traditions of religious art and architecture are to this day continued unbroken. The eleboration of the argument was considered necessary in order to drive home the point to the protagonists of the theory of the Gupta origin for the bronzes and sculptures of South India of the early medieval period, that their theory is not based on solid grounds. For, the schools of *sthapatis* which were responsible for the creation of such monuments of beauty as the *stūpas* of Amrāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, could not be thought to have suddenly disappeared from the scene, leaving the vacuum, thus created, to be filled in by *sthapatis* from the Gupta kingdom of North India, or by *sthapatis* trained in the Gupta schools of art. May be, as has been said above, there were a few adventurous *sthapatis* who went to Pāṭalīputra or Sārnāth or Mathurā and got training in such traditions of art as were in vogue in those places. Even these men with such a training, after their return, had to work in the local atmosphere only, which, being usually powerful on account of the fact that it is favoured by a large number of adherents, gradually prevailed upon them. Thus it will be clear that the works of art of later periods too, of this region, need not be deemed to have been inspired by influences of art traditions from other parts. That such specimens were really the products of local people is abundantly proved by the bronzes examined above. All that was common between them and similar known Gupta examples was only the theme, their refined treatment being common to all the works produced during the period everywhere. In illustration of this the following may be cited.

In all the Buddhas of the Āndhra-Pallava period discussed above, there is not a single specimen where the drapery covers the entire body. On the contrary, Buddha images from Sultanganj, Mathurā and Sārnāth which are attributed to the Gupta period show the drapery covering the entire body. Secondly the frills noticed at the ends of the

drapery of these sculptures, are completely absent from the drapery of the bronzes in question.[1] Thirdly the treatment of the heads and torso of the Amarāvatī and Buddhapāḍ specimens are more vigorous and powerful whereas the style of the Gupta specimens is rather effeminate. Fourthly the gestures of the figures of the Āndhra-Pallava period are varied, while they seem to be limited in the case of the Gupta specimens. Fifthly, the facial features of the later bronzes from Buddhapāḍ are clearly in the style in which sculptures were done at a slightly later period in South India, a style which has very little in common with that of the North Indian specimens referred to above. Furthermore, while a school of architecture with a distinct form of *vimāna* can develop of its own accord in the South in contrast to the pure and mixed style of northern school, it is difficult to conceive that sculpture which went hand in hand with the temples from the earliest days of wood carving should be an exotic borrower in its elements or technique. These and other details are proof positive to show that the bronzes have been done by *sthapatis* of the region where they were found, according to the traditions of art of their schools.

These bronzes are all done in the *cire perdue* method but cast hollow with a core of sand instead of solid metal. To cast bronzes hollow was definitely cheaper and this method appears to have been used widely during the early periods. Only the bronzes produced from about 900 A. D. are solid. Even here, those belonging to temples with comparatively meagre resources, and the bronzes of the temples of village deities are cast hollow, obviously for reasons of economy.

TAMIL-PALLAVA BRONZES

By about the end of the 6th century A. D. the political darkness that enveloped South India, especially of Tamilnāḍ, receded and a bright dawn was ushered in by the royal dynasty headed by Siṁhavishṇu Pallava. The history of the Āndhra-Pallavas who had Kāñchīpuram as their headquarters is still obscure in many places although one thing is abundantly clear that many of the early kings of this dynasty used to frequent the Kṛishṇā valley. But Siṁhavishṇu and his successors seem to have become wedded to their capital and instead of looking to the regions in the north for their activities, they concentrated their attention more and more on the regions, to the south of Kāñchīpuram, where too lay a wide strip of land, watered by the Kāverī, equal in fertility to the Kṛishṇā valley and resplendent with scenes of nature of great beauty.[2] The

[1] A number of specimens of later periods from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam have this feature, due to influence from Nālandā etc.

[2] *Pallankoril Jaina Copper-plate Grant of Early Pallava period* in *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, 1958–59.

people of this region spoke the language of Tamil which was at once chaste and sweet, possessing a hoary past and a wonderful literature. Leaving aside gradually their Prākṛitic and Telugu proclivities the kings of this line of the Pallavas, mingled freely with the Tamils and absorbed many a salient feature of their culture while at the same time chastening them by their own learning, past traditions, nobility and unceasing endeavour. It is known that even during the time of Mahendravarman I, his sway extended upto Tiruchirapalli, if not beyond it, where he not only caused a temple to Śiva excavated on the face of the rock but also had a Sanskrit inscription with text containing passages in *double entendre* engraved on it.[1] Since then, inscriptions of kings of this dynasty began to be found in various places in Tamilnāḍ and rarely any of them were known from the Āndhradeśa. From this time onwards bronzes were reported from this region. Thus in every respect, these Pallava kings became naturalised in Tamilnāḍ, and they may, therefore, be called, again for the sake of convenience, as the Tamil-Pallavas in contradistinction to the earlier Pallavas whom we have called the Āndhra-Pallavas. The works of art including bronzes produced during this period may also be called likewise.

Almost all the examples of bronzes examined above are representations of the Buddha. The study of the stage of development of the various details of one of them when compared with those of another, therefore, yielded more or less a definite basis for assigning them to more or less definite places in a chronological sequence. This was the period when Buddhism continued to be popular with the people. Hence the existence of bronzes representing only the Buddha. But from the end of the 6th century A. D. the tables were turned against Buddhism, and once again Brahmanism of the Purāṇic form (now popularly known as Hinduism) slowly took its place. The sustained efforts of the noble-souled Āḻvārs and Nāyanmārs were mainly responsible for this revival. To them the kings of the Tamil country extended unstinted co-operation. From the beginning, this religion showed trends of two separate sects, one of them following Śiva as the supreme deity and the other following Vishṇu as the Lord of all that is seen and unseen. The leaders of one sect vied with those of the other in trying to popularise their sectarian tenets. The main line of approach of theirs was through the medium of soul-stirring prayers couched in elegant Tamil that was the language of the people. Secondly they tried to elaborate gradually the rituals of temple worship one of which pertained to taking images out in procession for the benefit of the people in general. Besides, worship of deities dear to their heart by individuals in their houses began to be popular. These new aspects of the religious life of the people naturally required portable images. Though stone could serve this purpose as well, yet glamour and expediency and probably wealth and prosperity were responsible for making images

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 28-30.

in metal. Unlike the Buddhists of early centuries of the Chrisitian era, who seem to have restricted their demand to Buddha images alone, in the case of the followers of Vaishṇavism and Śaivism, there was demand for a variety of images representing the several aspects and *līlas* of their gods and goddesses. This was responsible for the production of countless bronzes in course of time. This was not only characteristic of the Hindu worship of these periods, but of the Buddhists too, who in imitation of the Hindus, began to have a highly developed pantheon, metallic representations of members of which became an intergral item of their worship. The Jainas followed suit. Thus innumerable bronzes were produced since this period. Though for ascertaining the relative importance and date of each of these, it would be advantageous to study them subject-wise as has been done in the case of the Buddha bronzes above, here they are studied period-wise. For, the great variety of bronzes of a particular period show, in spite of the differences in the themes represented by them, certain fundamental characteristics in the conception and execution of details, which are found to be elaborated, modified or changed in later specimens. Such a study, we believe, will give more or less a complete picture of the stage of development of art of bronzes during a particular period, which is seen to pave the way for its further development in the subequent periods.

The Tamil-Pallavas ruled from Kāñchīpuram from the end of the 6th century A.D. to about 850 A.D. During the early part of this period, a number of temples to Śiva and Vishṇu were built. On account of the fact that the religious practices were yet simple, no metal images belonging to this early phase have been known. From the eigth century, however, this was changed and bronzes begin to appear sporadically.

But as has been said above, the authors of the *Catalogue* have stated that there existed no bronzes belonging to this period, and have consequently not assigned the Somāskanda (Fig. 36)[1] and the Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38)[2] to any definite period. And after discussing about the Vishṇu (Fig. 25) they have grouped it with a few other Vishṇu bronzes which they have assigned to the 10th century A.D.[3] But these bronzes along with the others (Figs. 15–20) are some of the earliest of the bronzes so far known and their features as will be detailed in the proper context, suggest a date for them which is perhaps not removed from the Tamil-Pallava period.

Again it must be remembered here that, every one of the bronzes being a product of a separate mould, or a work of a different *sthapati* or a piece of art, not of a single date, it is necessarily different from others in its treatment and it has its own fixed position in

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 107.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

the history of the art. So much so, the bronzes discussed here are dealt with individually as far as possible, in a chronological order, with a summary, at the end, of the results of our study giving the common characteristics that are constantly associated with all the bronzes of each period. Another important reason which made the authors of the *Madras Museum Catalogue* to say that there existed no Pallava bronzes, was perhaps that no inscriptions of this period refer to any bronzes, nor are there bronzes with inscriptions belonging to this period, whereas in each of the subsequent periods there are inscriptions referring to bronzes[1] and there are also a few inscribed bronzes. These are of course difficulties which are insuperable especially in a scientific study of the kind attempted here. But as we have said at the outset, in the absence of any definite clue to the age of a particular item of bronze, its date may have to be fixed approximately with the aid of a comparative study of the details of representations either in stone, painting or in any other medium, of the same theme, more or less in the style in which the one compared is fashioned.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, the following pieces of evidence relating to the knowledge of the people of this period on manipulating metal and making metal images are worth consideration. The famous inscription of Mahendravarman I Pallava (*c.* 600–630 A.D.) from Maṇḍagapaṭṭu with the purport that the king caused to be excavated a shrine to the gods in stone without wood, *metal* etc., may be taken to prove that the working on metal was fairly known in the early part of the 7th century, so as to be employed in the work of building houses etc. That the making of bronzes was in vogue during the late 8th century A.D. is known from the fact that Tirumaṅgai Āḻāvr, one of the last of the Vaishṇava saints, who belonged to this time, is said to have raided the Buddhist *vihāra* at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam which was "full of images of Buddha including gold ones."[2]

Moreover, as we have already stated, though scholars like Messrs. Ramachandran and Irwin have not mentioned the word Pallava, yet the 7th–8th or 8th–9th century dates assigned by them to some of the examples of bronzes they have examined prove the existence of bronzes belonging to the period by virtue of the fact that it was the Pallavas that were dominant in South India then. And recently other scholars[3] have begun to call such figures as the Vishāpaharaṇa[4] (Fig. 38) as Pallava bronzes.

Yet the number of bronzes, known so far, that can be assigned to this period is very small, hardly exceeding a dozen. Of these a majority are representations of Vishṇu, a

1 *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, pp. 30, 33.

2 T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

3 Mr. Karl Khandalavala, *Mārg*, IV, No. 4, p. 19.

4 *Catalogue*, p. 108. F. H. Gravely and C. Sivaramamurti, *Illustrations of Indian Sculpture mostly Southern*, Pl. XXX.

few are of Śiva and one or two Buddhist. As will be shown presently, somehow or other some of the bronzes of the former category appear to be the earliest amongst them.

Fig. 15 The Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa[1] seems to have features which necessitate its study, now. It is said to come from Peruntoṭṭam in the Mayavaram region of the Tanjore District. It is an example of *sthānaka* image in the *sama-bhaṅga* posture which should be rigid. Here however, the rigidity is relieved to some extant by such appendages as the dangling *kuṇḍalas*, the flexible arms, the flowing *yajñopavīta*, the realistic bows on either side and the broad, swaying loop of the *uttarīya* tied to the waist. There is a *kirīṭa* which is tapering and topped by an inverted cup-like part having in its centre a slightly projecting stud. The crown is ornamented in a simple manner and at its bottom is the fillet going round the head. The face is longish with features suggesting smile and *adbhuta* in the countenance. There are *makara-kuṇḍalas* in the ears. The folds in the neck probably answers the description of Vishṇu as *kambu-grīva*. A broad *kaṇṭhī* (necklet) studded with big gems and fringed below with tassels of pearls adrons the neck. There is neither a mark nor a figure, representing *Śrīvatsa* on the right chest. A ribbon-like *yajñopavīta*, with pearls stitched to it and with a clasp, is seen and it goes over the right fore-arm. Two slender thread-like strings branch off from this *yajñopavīta* at the clasp. The smaller one is above and it follows the course of the main strand. The other is long and it first drops vertically to the waist, then takes a curve to the right, then again drops down vertically in between the legs and at the place just above the right ankle where the lower garment ends, it takes a turn to the right. At this point it has a big bead with a smaller spacer on either side. Then it goes back (Fig. 16) and is carried up along the right thigh and when it has reached the hip it is shown going up vertically till it reaches the back of the neck. A broad *udara-bandha* with a prominent gem is seen on the stomach. The shoulders are thick so as to make room for another arm to spring from each. Upto the elbow the arm is thick because two arms are seen to be joined there. From the side of each elbow starts a forearm, which is treated smoothly curving as though it is made of rubber or plastic, the emblem held by its hand touching the shoulder. The discus in the right hand is held parallel to the sagittal plane of the body with probably a flame on either side of its rim and one from its apex. The conch in the left hand is probably sinistral and has three flames in the same positions as in the discus. In both the emblems no flame is found in the centre. The lower right hand is held almost perpendicular to the straight line of the body and is in *varada-mudrā*, with probably a small lotus on the palm. The left hand is placed on the hip. The arms are decorated with tasselled *keyūras* and a pair of *valayas* adorn the wrists. The

[1] *Lalit Kalā*, No. 7, Pl. VII a.

the part below naval shows slight bulging suggesting a graceful fold. The lower garment which reaches to the ankles, has a thick fold at its lower end. Where its two vertical ends meet between the ankles there is a hem, and there is a vertical band-like thing between the legs, which is tucked up on the left side of the waist with a broad projecting end. That the garment is striped is indicated by a series of double lines of simple workmanship, running parallel to one another. A simple waist-band with a *kaṭi-sūtra* consisting of a symmetrically shown thick loop on either side is also seen. The *uttarīya* (upper garment) is tied round the waist in the form of a threefold sash above and a single sash falling below, in the form of nearly three-fourth of a circle. Hanging from the lowest fold of the former is the long end of a sash seen on each leg, widely separated from each other. There is a beautiful bow on either side from which hangs an end of the *uttarīya*, of which the tip is triangular in shape. No *pādasaras* or anklets adorn the ankles. The pedestal on which this figure stood is missing.

Now let us describe the back side of the bronze. A broad *śiraś-cakra* composed of long and narrow petals not bound by anything and with a tassel hanging gracefully from its centre is fixed to the crown of which only the top is seen from this side. Below, on the back of the neck are seen seven strands of hair falling in beautiful but thick curls. Just below the *śiraś-cakra* there seems to be another row of such curly strands of hair; but it is not clear. The gemset *yajñopavīta* is clearly seen here. There are two bands on the waist, the upper smaller one being the regular band, while the lower thicker one being that of the *uttarīya*. The bow ornaments and the hanging ends are noteworthy. The workmanship of the lower garment is simple. The portion above waist is more rounded in modelling than that below the waist, which is somewhat flat. The two arms on either side are joined one over the other in the manner of terracotta work and the smooth and deep curve that each upper arm takes is easily seen from this side. Fig. 16

From the artistic point of view, this bronze would have been a fine specimen if it is divested of the heavy drapery and heavier ornaments. But considering the small size of the figure, the enormity of details and their clear execution, it is apparent that the *sthapati* who did this was not new to his job, although he seems to have been obsessed with the ideas of treatment that seems to be more suited to large sculptures in stone. Another interesting thing about this piece is that between it and the bronze head of the Buddha discussed last above there is a significant difference in workmanship although some similarity in the treatment of their faces is noticeable.

As we have presumed this to be the earliest of the bronzes of the Tamil-Pallava period, it is now necessary to fix its chronological position which will become then the basis for the study of the examples of subsequent periods. Its *kirīṭa*, compared with

those of all other bronze Vishṇu figures noticed here as well as illustrated in the *Catalogue* and other publications, is very simple. The prominent projection surmounting the *kirīṭas* of all other images, is only indicated here. Let us examine the depiction of this feature in the Vishṇu sculptures of Mahābalipuram and Kāñchīpuram, which are said to date from the period 650–750 A.D. The *kirīṭa* is high and conical and the stud-like finial is conspicuous by its absence from the Vishṇus namely the one[1] in the Trimūrti cave, the Trivikrama[2] in the Varāhamaṇḍapa, the one[3] in the small shrine found admist the magnificent Arjuna's Penance sculpture, from Mahābalipuram and that[4] from Kīḻmāvilaṅgai, all dating from before 700 A.D. Nor does it find a place on the *kirīṭa* of Vishṇu[5] occurring in the Liṅgodbhava panel of the Kailāsanātha temple of Kāñchīpuram, of which the date lies between 700 and 720 A.D.

The reason for the absence of this stud from the *kirīṭas* of the above mentioned Vishṇus may be the following. It has been recognised by all, that the earliest art traditions of South India, as represented by the famous sculptures of Amarāvatī and other places in the Āndhradeśa, were continued unbroken here and that their influence was great in the earliest sculptures of the Pallava period. In the Buddhist sculptures the deity with a crown (*kirīṭin*) was Śakka or Indra, and the crown is shown like a short cylindrical cap.[6] Later on when Brahminism was revived, Śakka along with the *devas* was given his usual position in the Brahminical pantheon, and the crown, the special attribute of Indra was transferred to Vishṇu one of whose names is Upendra. When this crown came to be depicted on the head of Vishṇu, it lost its original shape and became gradually elongated. Thus in this form it is seen in the early Tamil-Pallava sculptures mentioned above. Hence naturally, the stud on top of it, is absent from them.

But its slow emergence is seen in the Vishṇu, also an early sculpture but definitely later than those examined above, illustrated on Plate II of *Guide to the Archæological Galleries of the Madras Museum*, as well as in the Vishṇu[7] from Satyamaṅgalam to be found in the Hindu Sculpture Gallery of the Madras Museum. While the former may be taken to be stylistically either contemporaneous with or somewhat earlier than the bronze under discussion, the latter, on account of its details being more envolved than

[1] A. H. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, Vol. II, Pl. IX.
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXI b.
[3] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXX b.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Pl. V b.
[5] *Ibid.*, Vol III, Pl. VI a.
[6] C. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvatī Sculptures in the Madras Museum*, Pl. XXXII, 3 a.
[7] See for a sketch of it in C. Sivaramamurti's *Geographical and Chronological Factors in Indian Iconography* in Ancient India, No. 6, p. 26, Fig. 11.

those of the bronzes, is certainly later than it. Anyway the position of the bronze is somewhere between these two.

The second important detail the style of which gives a clue to the age of the bronze is the *yajñopavīta*. Unlike the *kirīṭa* which is a special feature of Vishṇu alone, this is common to icons of several other deities. In one of the earliest sculptures of the time of Mahendravarman I, namely the magnificent Gaṅgādhara panel from Tiruchirappalli, the figure of Śiva, has this in the form of a thick ribbon going over the right arm. Even in the case of Vishṇus from Mahābalipuram and Kāñchīpuram mentioned above, the same type of *yajñopavīta* is seen. But it must be mentioned here that though the thick variety of it is seen, as a rule, associated with the chief figures, different varieties of sacred thread are found used for the various other figures occurring in one and the same composition as *e.g.*, the Gaṅgādhara panel from Tiruchirappalli, the Śeshaśāyin panel from Mahābalipuram and the Liṅgodbhava panel from Kāñchīpuram. In the Madras Museum stone Vishṇu, it has become studded with gems or pearls and is not shown going over the right arm. In none of the figures, of the former groups, is there the two other subsidiary threads while its presence is indicated in the Madras Museum Vishṇu. This shows that upto the time of this Vishṇu this has not come into vogue in the Tamil country. The Satyamaṅgalam Vishṇu figure mentioned above shows not only the thick variety of *yajñopavīta* going over the right arm but also the subsidiary threads too, which are also conspicuous in the other bronze Vishṇus noticed below. In these figures the lower subsidiary thread, which is long, goes inside the drapery and emerges out at the right ankle and then is seen at the back side only above the waist. But in the bronze under examination this is seen outside, going over the garment instead of being covered by it. That this is not a new element introduced by the *sthapatis* of the Tamil-Pallava period and that they were simply continuing an ancient South Indian tradition will be easy to understand when we know that this kind of *yajñopavīta* was not only common in the early Chālukyan sculptures from Bādāmi,[1] but also from Amarāvatī[2] and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa[3]. Especially noteworthy is the fact that in these early sculptures too, the long subsidiary thread goes over the lower garment. Hence the depiction of it as going underneath the garment is undoubtedly a later innovation. So, it is clear that the bronze under discussion is no doubt one of the earliest where the ancient tradition is continued, because in almost all the figures of Vishṇu of the subsequent periods the thread goes underneath the garment. Another thing about the *yajñopavīta* is the clasp, over the chest, which is simple. As it develops gradually into an ornate clasp in later figures, its simple style here indicates an early date for the bronze.

[1] R. D. Banerji, *Bas-reliefs of Bādāmi* (M.A.S.I., No. 25), Pls. III a, b; IX a; XIV b; XVII a; etc.
[2] C. Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. VIII, 25, 30 (sketches), Pl. LXI.
[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, (1938), (M.A.S.I., No. 71), Pl. XXXVII B.

Thirdly, the style of the lower garment though more evolved than the lower garment of Vishṇu figures from Mahābalipuram and Kāñchīpuram in that it is depicted as striped, yet its comparative simplicity is easily known when it is compared with the lower garment of the Satyamaṅgalam Vishṇu and other bronze Vishṇus to be noticed below and those illustrated in the *Catalogue*. In these, the ornateness of the garment is probably due to the fact that the *sthapatis* were interested in depicting beautifully the *pītāmbara* (yellow silk) which is special to Vishṇu.

Fourthly, the facial features of the bronze are more or less akin to those of Vishṇu sculptures from Mahābalipuram and Kāñchīpuram although they are a bit pronounced here. But in all these the face is rather elongate than in the later bronzes to be described below. The modelling of the torso is powerful as in the stone sculptures and has not reached the stage of being slender and cylindrical in form which characterises later images. The treatment of the limbs, too, is according to earlier traditions. The most interesting item of the treatment is the peculiar manner of showing the curving of the upper arms, a feature which by its absence from later figures clearly suggests an early date for this figure.

Of the other details, the one that seems to us to be of a clinching nature is the treatment of the hair. As described above, the curly strands are thick and there seems to be only one row of them here. Quite interestingly enough, in all the bronzes representing this and other themes, which we think to be later, there are usually two or more rows of these curly strands of hair ; and slowly they become thinner and thinner. Similarly the *śiraś-cakra* too is in its simplest form, and its transformation into an actual *cakra* with rim etc., very similar in workmanship to the *cakra* held in the right hand of Vishṇu, is seen in almost all the later bronzes of Vishṇu. The method of showing the branching off of the arms is also quite archaic in this figure, because unlike in other Vishṇus, the upper arms here start from the shoulder and the vertical demarcation between the upper and the lower arms is clear.

The other points of workmanship namely the treatment of the bows, ornaments and the flames on the discus and the conch, on which the authors of the *Catalogue* have dwelt at length, are also interesting here. The bows on either side of the figure as well as the smaller bows of the *kaṭi-sūtra* are done in a naturalistic manner and the folds are thick compared to the bows of later Vishṇus. The bands of sash are also likewise thick, broad and closely running. The median loop is the broadest in this, and above all the two pairs of tassels one on each leg of this figure, are more widely separated than in other examples. The festoons are conspicuous by their absence.

Similarly in the case of the flames, there are only three on the *cakra* and the conch, shown at intervals on their peripheries. No flames are seen to issue out of the ends of

the axle of the *cakra*. In fact only rarely this feature is seen in bronze Vishṇus *e.g.*, the Vishṇu of the Kalyāṇasundara group from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 126) and Vishṇu No. 2 of the *Catalogue* (Fig. 25). The frequent occurrence of this feature in sculptures of Vishṇu, Durgā etc., belonging to periods after 750 A. D., or so, seems to suggest that there has been an artistic convention to use it there only. The positions of the discus and the conch also in this figure are akin to those of the same emblems of early figures.

From this long discussion of the bronze, the date of the figure seems to be definitely later than the time of Rājasimha Pallava (*c.* 700–720 A.D.). How much later is difficult to be ascertained. But this much seems to be most probable namely that it is one of the few bronzes of the time of Nandivarman Pallavamalla. For, it was he who began to devote special attention to the development of *bhakti* towards Vishṇu. The beautiful Vaikuṇṭhapperumāḷ temple of Kāñchī completed by him affords testimony to this. Though he was at the beginning equally devoted to Vishṇu and Śiva, in his later years he seems to have become an ardent devotee of the former deity. This may have been due to the influence exerted over him by the great Vaishṇava saint Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār, who has sung in elegant Tamil, beautiful hymns in praise of the Lord of Parameśvara–viṇṇagara (original name of Vaikuṇṭhapperumāḷ temple), in which he pays a tribute to this king too. Only from this time, the rituals relating to the worship in temples began to assume an elaborate form as can be known from a number of inscriptions of this period. The Vaishṇavites under the leadership of Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār got the idea of offering worship to small images of the Lord, made of bronze, from the similar practice of the Buddhists of Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, from some of the *vihāras* of which Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār himself is said to have removed gold Buddha images. That he knew of the existence of these Buddhist images in the *vihāras* at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and that he raided them, are not improbable because the Āḻvār hailed from Tiruvāli which is not far from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and that his zeal for promoting Vaishṇavism was unsurpassed. Probably in and around the Āḻvār's birth place were produced some of the earliest specimens of bronze Vishṇus, the bronzes discussed here belonging to this group. That to begin with the bronzes were only of miniature size, probably intended for private worship, is known from the fact that each of them is hardly more than 10 to 15 *cm* high.

All these facts go to prove clearly that the bronze under discussion is no doubt one of the earliest to be produced during the time of this Āḻvār or during Nandivarman Pallavamalla's reign. As the practice of worshipping such images might have taken sufficient time to evolve after the propagation of this form of worship by the Āḻvār, we may not be far wrong if we assign the production of such images to the middle or the second half of the 8th century A.D., the present bronze being one of them. The bronze represents Śrīnivāsa.

Fig. 17 Next in point of time comes the standing Vishṇu,[1] also from Peruntoṭṭam. Though in posture this piece and the previous one are similar, a comparison of the details of this with those of the latter reveals the following differences :—

First of all, the *kirīṭa*, although cylindrical in form is more ornate here. The stud-like projection at its top is pronounced. And the top of the *kirīṭa* is worked like a lotus. The face is square rather than oval. Though the features are sharp and expressive of joy, they are not so natural as in the previous one ; and the eyes are encrusted with silver which is quite a novel thing although we have seen it in the head of the Buddha (Fig. 7) where according to Mr. T. N. Ramachandran the encrustation is 'a later interpolation'. The *makara-kuṇḍalas* are not so prominent ; on the shoulders are shown a small ring of beads, which is a new addition. Unlike the previous bronze here the neck is very short and does not show any folds. A broad *kaṇṭhī* is all that adorns the neck. The *yajñopa-vīta* is beautifully worked and here the clasp however is not very prominent. And here are also seen the two subsidiary strands. Of these, the lower longer strand, unlike in the previous bronze, goes inside the lower garment both in front and at the back and is seen again on the right ankle not following the curve of the hem of the garment on it as in the previous bronze but quite away from it. Another interesting thing about this strand is, unlike in the case of the previous image instead of going up and joining the neck at back, it joins the main strand. That this has since become the norm is amply borne out by the bronzes of Vishṇu of later periods. This can only mean, therefore, that the *sthapati* who made this piece was not quite close in time to the *sthapati* of the previous image and that he had fashioned or followed a new tradition regarding this element which began to be practised widely ever since. The *udara-bandha* is devoid of the big gem at the centre and has assumed the form of a simple pearly band.

The shoulder is not so powerful and the torso shows a trend that tends to become cylindrical. The fold on the stomach shows off. An interesting mark is seen on the right chest which stands for the *Śrīvatsa*, which was absent from the previous one. The arms are modelled in a manner suggesting strength. There are the *keyūras* without the festoons on the arms and three *valayas* on each wrist. At the joints of the elbows of both the pairs of arms a garland-like object is seen ; a full view of it is seen only at the back (Fig. 18). Probably it represents the *vanamālā*. Its lower portion, in front, appears to be a loop with a big bead flanked by a small bead on either side, hanging low. Unlike the previous bronze, the fore-arms of the two upper arms are held up vertically. The *cakra* is missing, but the conch is seen in the left upper hand. Its workmanship including the flames is clearly of a later date than that of the above bronze. The lower right hand is in

[1] *Lalit Kalā*, No. 7, Pl. VII c.

varada pose, with a lotus in the centre of the palm. The *gadā* is held by the corresponding left hand.

The lower garment is more ornate. The knot of the *kaṭi-sūtra* shows a tendency to become something else, and the small bows on its sides are definitely more evolved than those of the previous figure. The same development is seen in the case of the bands of sash going round the waist. Between them, there is more space here. The curve of the broad loop is slightly less here. The bows on either side are also less heavy and naturalistic than the previous bronze. The heavy lump of the hem of the garment below, distinctly seen in the previous image, is absent from this. Here also we see a pair of hanging ends of sash and waist-band, on each leg. *Pādasaras* are seen on the ankles here, a feature not distinctly seen in the above bronze.

Now to the back side of the bronze, The *śiraś-cakra* is definitely more developed than that of the above, because here, the central knob is worked like a *simha-mukha* from which hangs a strand, and the petals are no longer long and shallow but short and thick. That this bronze is definitely more advanced in style is proved by the treatment of the curls of hair hanging over the back. In the place of a single row of thick curls of the previous image, here two rows of slender curls are seen. The broad dotted parallel bands decorating the *pītāmbara* of the icon are distinctly visible from this side. A new element not found in the above bronze is seen here. It is the projecting fan-like end of the garment tucked up above the waist-band. The last but very marked difference between the two bronzes is seen in the manner in which the second arm is made to spring from the main arm on each side. Here, upto the elbow, there is only a single stem and from the elbow starts the second arm, whereas in the previous bronze this arm is seen separate right from the shoulder. Fig. 18

The modelling of the back shows that it is more rounded above the waist than below it.

From the foregoing it is evident that this is later than the previous Śrīnivāsa. On the ground of the marked development of details met with here, this may be later than the other by about two generations and its date may, therefore, be round about 800 A.D. It also lacks the pedestal. It represents Vishṇu.

The beautiful seated Vishṇu now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, seems to belong to a slightly later period. It may also hail from the Shiyali-Mayavaram region. It is of the *āsīna* type and is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose with left leg bent and kept on the *padmāsana* and the right leg hanging down. Fig. 19

Here the *kirīṭa* is still more ornate and the surmounting knob is very prominent. The round face shows sharp features. Like the above dsicussed figure, it has a short neck.

Kuṇḍalas are not much different from those of the above. The *kaṇṭhī* is neither like that of the above nor like that of the one before it. It is set with jewels and has a series of beads or pearls at its bottom. Its style and form are in anticipation of the *kaṇṭhī* of the bronzegilt Maitreya (Fig. 28), from Melayūr. *Yajñopavīta* is of the same type and shows only traces of a clasp. The longer subsidiary strand has become thin. *Udara-bandha* is of the usual type. The torso has assumed a slender cylindrical form with only a slight suggestion of a fold on the belly. The *Śrīvatsa* mark on the right chest has become very much pronounced. The shoulders are comparatively weak, and have the circular bead ornamentation met with in the above. But an interesting new element is seen on the shoulders here. Two strands of curly hair are seen prominently, a feature which is absent from the above image but has had since a chequered career. The arms too are slender and they are decorated with *keyūras* and *valayas*. The upper arms spring from the elbow not in a curve and the distance between them and the lower arms is more. Though the discus is inclined towards the face, the conch is held vertically, both of them reaching upto half the height of the *kirīṭa*. A very interesting development is noticed in the depiction of the flames of the emblems. Unlike in the two previous examples, here, besides the three flames on the periphery of the emblems, there are two flames one at each end of the axle of the discus and a flame at the back of the conch, and they are prominent. The lower right hand is in *varada* pose and the corresponding left hand is in *āhūya-varada* pose. The lower garment bears closely engraved parallel lines. A tassel is seen on the left leg.

Fig. 20 Examining the back side of the figure, the *kirīṭa* is very well seen, the *śiraś-cakra*, though without the *siṁha-mukha* knob, shows thick petals; and there is only one row of curly strands of hair and they are larger in number than in the previous two cases. The other significant details of this piece are the elbows of upper arms showing a tendency to become angular; the peculiar manner of their attachment to the main arms, the actual mark of joining being visible only from its middle, the wide space that exists not only between the torso and the arms but also between the main arm and the upper arm; the highly worked waist-bands and bows and the manner of tucking up of the end of the cloth.

Another very interesting additional element seen in this bronze is the *padmāsana*, which is absent from all the bronzes discussed above. Of course, an example of a *padmāsana* alone, without the Buddha, has been noticed already (above pp. 23-24). The *āsana* of this image is much more evolved than that. While the former is circular in form, here the *āsana* seems to have assumed a slightly ovoid form. Only the upper row of petals is seen on a simple circular *āsana* in the other instance, whereas here the clear demarcation between the upper and lower *āsanas* suggests an attempt at showing the flower as a

double one; and the petals of the other one are simple and have no demarcating lines either in their periphery or in their centre as in the case of the present example. Above all in the Āndhra–Pallava *padmāsana*, there is no trace of spikes. Perhaps no *prabhā* was required for the Buddha which stood on it. Here two spikes are present and they are thick and prominent. Their attachment to the *āsana* is very interesting and shows an early stage in the development of this new element. While in the later bronzes, the spikes, as a rule, spring from the rectangular *bhadrāsana* here curiously they spring from the *padmāsana* itself, a workmanship which clearly suggests inexperience on the part of the *sthapati* of this bronze. Perhaps this pedestal is one of the earliest examples of its kind.

From the point of view of art, this bronze is definitely a better specimen than the other two examined above. The *yajñopavīta* and other decorative details are no longer heavy. The squattish character of the modelling seen in the previous examples has obviously yielded place to slimness and a certain amount of refinement of treatment characterises it. But there is still the rigidity of posture and archaism of treatment of the legs, emblems, garment and the *mudrās* of the hand. Nevertheless, it is one of the fine specimens of art of the Tamil–Pallava period, and its date may be about the beginning of the 9th century A.D. It represents Vishṇu as Varadarāja (?), an identification suggested by the *varada* pose of both the lower hands.

The bronzes that have been discussed above,[1] and the one discussed below (Fig. 30) are small in size and are known to hail from Peruntoṭṭam near Kāverippūmpaṭṭiṇam in the Tanjore District. Their style in general and the workmanship of their details in particular are such as to make us state plainly that we are ourselves sceptical about their genuineness in the real sense of the term. The reason for dealing with them here and giving them priority over the others that follow, would by now have been clear, namely their sheer style. They apparently have all the characteristics of sculptures of the period to which they are assigned, the dating in every one of the cases to be taken *cum grano salis*. Some new details noticed in them but not found in stone sculpture representing the same theme, of the period, may be said to be due either to the persistence of still earlier traditions or to the innovations brought about by expediency and evolution of the art. On these grounds, it is unlikely that these bronzes are spurious. At any rate as their details are found to afford a basis for the study of the bronzes to be dealt with below, these may be taken to be amongst the earliest examples of the art of bronzes of the Tamil–Pallava period till some definite reasons are known to the contrary. As all of them

[1] Mr. Karl Khandalavala is right when he assigns these three images to the second half of the 8th century A.D. (*Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p 19), and we have tried to be more precise, after a detailed examination. He is correct when he says that the other (probably he means our Fig. 30), one is later (*ibid.*).

are more or less in the same style, it seems probable that it was the deltaic area of the Tanjore District that supported the art during this period, in the same manner as the Kṛishṇā valley did during earlier periods. The fact that Buddha images existed in the *vihāras* of Nāgapṭṭiṇam in the 8th century A.D., lends support to this hypothesis. Moreover the discovery of innumerable magnificent specimens of bronzes as treasure-trove finds from various places, and the presence of numerous examples in the countless temples of the District speak volumes about the development of the art to unprecedented heights through the ages in this region. They are, therefore, proof positive to show that the art flourished here more vigorously than in any other part of South India.

Particulars of provenance etc., of the bronzes that will be dealt with hereafter are known except for a few. Some of them belong to places outside Tanjore District proper but within Tamil-nāḍ. This is highly suggestive of the fact that the art was widespread in Tamilnāḍ, though its citadal continued to be the deltaic area of the Tanjore District.

Fig. 21 The small standing Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa about 16 *cm* high now in the Trivandrum Museum is an interesting specimen which may be attributed to a slightly later period. The shape of the *kirīṭa* is rather peculiar and it has the look of the *kirīṭas* of much later times. Nevertheless, the other details of the figure are all in the characteristic style of the period. Hence its position here. The face is roundish and the expression is rather serene. The *kuṇḍalas* are heavy; only a single *kaṇṭhī* is seen on the neck. The *yajñopavīta* is probably of gems and it has no clasp, but as usual it goes over the right arms. Curiously the long strand of subsidiary *yajñopavīta* or *hāra* which is usually met with in later-day Vishṇus as well as in Vishṇu-like Buddhist images (*e.g.*, the bronze-gilt Maitreya from Melayūr, Fig. 28) is absent. The *udara-bandha* is broad and thin and has a diadem-like part in front. The arms are smooth, heavy and tubular in shape. The upper arms are shorter and they are bent so much as to leave no space between the arms. It is the simple style of the *cakra* and *śaṅkha*, held in the upper arms, that proves the antiquity of the figure. The lower right hand is in *varada* pose but in its palm is placed something which resembles a *ratna*. The lower left hand is placed on *kaṭi*, a posture which distinguishes this figure as Śrīnivāsa. Armlets and wristlets are also simple. The waist-band shows the knot with bows which are insignificant, while in laterday figures these assume greater prominence. An end of the waist-band hangs down on each leg upto the knee. But there does not exist another strand or string or a pair of such strings which are met with in bronzes of subsequent periods. There is a wide girdle also. Below it is the sash hanging in a deep and wide loop in front, and it has, at regular intervals, bands. The garment is thick and it bears four sets of incised lines, each set consisting of three lines, which is an archaic feature. Interestingly the *uttarīya* does not show any bows on the sides whereas their beginnings are met with in the Vishṇu-like

figure belonging to the Trivandrum Museum, discussed below. The hanging ends of the *uttarīya*, on the sides, are comparatively simple and insignificant.

The back view shows the *kirīṭa* as a separate entity which has been placed on the head over the luxuriant hair arranged in beautifully twisted strands which appear to be innumerable. They fall on the back of the neck in a realistic fashion. Significantly no *śirāś-cakra* is present, nor is any provision made for affixing one. This is proof positive for the fact that this detail was a later-day innovation. The other details such as the *yajñopavīta*, the *keyūra*, the gem-set or pearly girdle and the workmanship of the garment are all distinctly and clearly seen. Fig. 22

The standing Vishṇu ht. 21 *cm* br. 9·5 *cm* from Vaḷuḍuḍaiyūr, hamlet of Ādikuḍi in the Tiruchirappaḷḷi District, may be attributed to a slightly later period than the above. Here the *kirīṭa* is high and tapering with the crowning knob prominently seen. The facial features are somewhat worn out but they indicate *adbhuta*. Two *kaṇṭhīs* are seen on the neck. A twisted strand of hair, is seen in front of each shoulder. Besides, another similar strand of hair tucked up with flowers is seen on it. The *yajñopavīta* is of *vastra* and it is therefore ribbon-like. It is composed of the three strands of which the main central thick one goes over the right arm and the lower one goes down, gets into the lower garment, emerges out at the back and joins the main strand at the middle of the back. Interestingly this strand is comparatively thin. The arms are smooth and tapering. It is unfortunate that the emblems of the two upper hands are missing. If they were present, they would have aided in the dating of the piece. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the corresponding left hand is in *kaṭy-avalambita* pose. The bust is beautifully modelled and there is a big *Śrīvatsa* mark on the right chest. A gem-set broad *udara-bandha* is also seen. The manner in which the garment (*pītāmbara*) is worked suggesting thick folds on it is interesting as also that of the sashes which are considerably flat and somewhat stiff. The waist-band with a looped knot as well as the festoons and tassels hanging from it is interesting. The tucked up end of the garment seen on the left side and the bow end of cloth on either side are realistically done. An anklet is seen on each foot. Fig. 23

The back side of this piece shows a few significant details such as a single row of ten long twisted strands of hair, the uncircumscribed *śiraś-ckara* made of naturalistic petals, the beautifully worked *yajñopavīta* and *udara-bandha* and the stripes shown as horizontally running parallel lines on the garment which is simple and at the same time elegant. Fig. 24

The delicate nature of the modelling of the entire figure and its fine proportions are clearly seen from this side. In addition, the ornamentation, especially the *kirīṭa* is

graceful and appropriate. The figure is cast solid. While all the other examples of the art discussed above are cast hollow, this is the first instance of this technique. All these make the bronze a product of consummate skill and a splendid example of the art at the zenith of its development.

Fig. 25 The bronze that comes next is again a Vishṇu *i.e.*, Vishṇu No. 2, of the *Catalogue*. The *kirīṭa* is somewhat high and has developed a *karaṇḍa* top which is rather peculiar; the fillet at its bottom is broad, the face is ovid and the treatment of the eye-brows and the eyelids suggest an expression of wonder; the *kuṇḍalas* and the *kaṇṭhīs* which are more than one here, are not very clear; the *yajñopavīta* looks like a three-stranded pearly one and has the two usual subsidiary strands which are very slender and it is almost similar to the *yajñopavīta* of the stone Vishṇu in the Madras Museum illustrated on Pl. 11 of the *Guide to the Archaeological Galleries of the Madras Museum* in all respects including the bell-shaped clasp; the *udara-bandha* is broad and has a gem in front; *keyūras* and *valayas* are obviously more evolved than in the case of the above discussed bronzes; the shoulders are not powerful and there is no *Śrīvatsa* mark on the right chest; the torso and the neck, which is here somewhat high, are treated in a style which seems to be akin to that in which the Vishāpaharaṇa bronze (Fig. 38) discussed below is done. As in the case of the above figure, the arms are comparatively short and the space between them and the torso is more or less as wide as in the previous example; the upper arms appear to spring from the elbow of the main arm; the rim of the discus held in the right hand faces the beholder, and has only one flame at the top of the rim and one on each end of the axle; the conch has three flames in the usual places; and though not clear, the flames are done in somewhat a realitic fashion. Like the previous example, this too holds the lower right hand in *abhaya* pose, with the stalk of a lotus bud sticking to the palm. Its depiction here instead of a lotus design commonly seen in the other images, is indeed a clever innovation. The lower left hand holds a *gadā* with four bands, which is definitely more evolved than that of Vishṇu (Fig. 30) to be examined below.

The lower garment is depicted in a more refined manner; instead of the horizontal parallel lines that are seen in all the bronzes discussed above, here the folds are suggested by single thick lines curving upwards. The *kaṭi-sūtra* has the knot with a beautifully done loop on either side. From the source of each loop starts an end of what appears to be a pearly thread. Unlike the previous one, there are only two bands of the sash going round the waist. From the lower band hang ' moniliform festoons ' of which three are seen in front. This is clearly a step further than the previous bronze where only two such festoons are seen in front. Further, the broad median loop of the *uttarīya* has cast off the semi-circular form met within the earlier bronzes and has

become narrower with a suggestion of a bend at its lowest portion. The bows and the hanging ends on either side are also more ornate than they are in the previous one.

The back view shows more clearly the *karaṇḍas* of the *kirīṭa*, the *yajñopavīta*, the stripes on the garment and the beautiful modelling of the figure. It is also solid like the previous one with which it compares favourably, except in one are two respects such as the *kirīṭa* and the *yajñopavīta*. Fig. 26

From the style of this figure it is seen that it is slightly later than the above. Here also the figure is somewhat plump and squat, a feature characteristic of earlier specimens, especially those of stone. In addition to this, the positions of the emblems and the manner of showing the flames on them are also in an earlier style. But in view of the other distinctly developed details, a few features in an earlier style may have to be considered only as an echo of older traditions. That is supported by the technique in which this, like the previous one, is cast. This is also cast solid. Its date may therefore be about the second quarter of the 9th century A.D.

As this bronze has been dealt with in more than one place and has been assigned to the 10th century by the learned authors of the *Catalogue*, let us know what they have said about it. Firstly, their description of the bronze is as follows :—

" Vishṇu, height 25 *cm.* Conch sinistral. No pedestal. No history.

" The discus is held approximately parallel to the sagittal plane of the body with one flame issuing on either side from its centre and one from its upper edge as in stone images of the early Choḷa period; but the conch lacks the central flame shown in Jouveau-Dubreuil's illustration of its characteristic early Choḷa form resembling that of Vishṇu No. 1. That these two images must be classed together has already been pointed out above (pp. 25–26). The unusually broad median loop of the girdle is even less conventionalised in this image than in that, and the lion-face ornament is absent. The lower right hand holds a lotus bud between the thumb and first finger, the stalk of which extends right across the palm of the hand to the wrist."[1] Again on page 26 of the *Catalogue* they say the following about this: " In Vishṇu No. 2, this has the natural form with a large stalk extending right across the hand . . . . . Lotuses are held by several other Vishṇu images, but that none of them are so realistic as that held by Vishṇu No. 2 may not be without its significance. To sum up, the treatment of these images suggests that they may have been made prior to the full development of the more conventional style found in the great majority of images. This goes to confirm

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 63–64.

the date tentatively assigned to them in accordance with the results of Jouveau-Dubreuil's studies of the position of the discus in stone sculptures, namely, about the 10th century A. D. i.e., during the Early Chola period."

From the quotation it is clear that though the authors of the *Catalogue* have, with characteristic insight, noticed some of the early features of the bronze, on account of their preoccupation with the problems posed by Jouveau-Dubreuil's theories and due to the difficulty caused by clubbing and comparing examples of different dates, they have been led to assign this to the 10th century A.D. As regards Dubreuil's theories relating to the discus and conch in Vishṇu images, as has already been said above, so far as bronzes are concerned they do not seem to have any validity, whatever may be their usefulness in regard to the study of stone sculptures. Secondly, supposing that the position of the discus and the manner of depiction of the flames on it have something to do with the date of the specimen, yet they cannot be taken as the sole criterion for the purpose, because one swallow does not make the summer. They have to be studied in relation to other details of a particular bronze and the controversial question of date resolved on the basis of the stages of evolution of a majority of the details. For instance in the case of the bronze in question, though the position of the *cakra* and the modelling are in an earlier style, on account of the high development of other details it has to be dated late accordingly. The view expressed by the learned authors on the matter is worth noting: "Is the position of the discus in different periods less constant than Jouveau-Dubreuil seems to suppose? Or did the fully conventionalised style arise in the Chola period and the less conventionalised persist into the Vijayanagar? We are inclined to think that both the questions should probably be answered in the affirmative, but have no conclusive evidence to offer. They could no doubt be answered by an exhaustive study of such stone sculptures as can be dated in various temples, etc."[1] We may add here that even in the case of bronzes and other works of art where there is hardly any evidence regarding their chronological position, a careful study of their details in comparison with those of definitely datable specimens is bound to give satisfactory results although they may not be final. And it must be noted that though a few early features may be found in a later specimen, yet its general treatment and the development of the majority of details will certainly betray its age because as has alredy been said above, every specimen is a new creation, every new creation has some fresh detail introduced in it and every creator of the bronzes and every age contribute something to the development of the art. Such factors cannot be hidden away and will surely appear blinking before one who delves deep into the subject. Thus the 10th century date assigned to this Vishṇu by these scholars requires reconsidera-

1 *Ibid.*, p. 28.

tion not only because of the facts put forth above but also because of the significant remarks of the scholars themselves about the presence of certain unmistakably genuine early characteristics in this bronze. The latter being associated with similar works of art belonging to the first half of the 9th century, the bronze has been accordingly assigned to that period.[1]

Upto this century hardly any examples of bronzes other than those relating to Vaishṇavism have been reported so far; and even such bronzes as are noticed above seem to us to be rather productions of an early experimental stage in the development of the art on the ground that they are small and loaded with details which are more suited to stone sculptures. Gradually the art advanced and in the first half of the 9th century it seems to have entered on a glorious career, probably as a result of great demand for bronze images for purposes of worship by the followers of all religions. Thus, bronzes representing not only Vaishṇavite themes but themes of Śaivism and Buddhism were produced in increasing number in the following periods. Even then, the productions of this phase are, as a rule not spectacular in size, although the beauty of workmanship of bronzes representing a variety of themes, their proportionate and exquisite modelling and the appropriate and beautiful emballishments seen in several of them amply bear out the great skill of the *sthapatis* in modelling and technique as well as their expert knowledge of iconography.

The extremely well-finished bronze representing a four-armed deity belonging to the Trivandrum Museum has nearly all the characteristics including the agitated facial expression met with in the Bodhisattva Maitreya dealt with below. But there exists a significant difference in workmanship between them. While the details of the Maitreya are bold, the detalis of the bronze under examination are not only bold but also highly refined. Its provenance is not known and its height is about 52 *cm.* It bears all the appearance of a Vishṇu, but in the absence of the missing upper hands with emblems, the *Śrīvatsa-lāñchana* on the right chest and of the characteristic long *hāra*, its identification is not certain. Nor can it be taken to represent an aspect of Śiva, because there is no third eye on the forehead and the *makuṭa* is not one of *jaṭās* but seems to be a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*. Fig. 27

The following details of this bronze are of interest. The *kirīṭa* is decorated with gold diadems; the *makara-kuṇḍalas*, instead of being shown in profile, are shown in the frontal view; the *yajñopavīta* is of plaited gold wire, which makes it look like a rope; it goes over the right arms and it has no clasp and the joining line of the arms is clear, although the slanting position of the upper arms is in the characteristic style of the

[1] The date suggested for this in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 19, is too early.

period. The decorative details seen on the part below the waist include a few interesting items too. Of these the *paṭṭa* round the waist is not knotted in front with small bows on either side but is revetted with a gem and its two long flat ends hang the whole length of each of the legs. This is a novel detail not seen in the earlier bronzes. A gem-set girdle is seen below it and from it hangs down on the right leg only a long string. Below is the sash in rather a shallow loop. It is tied in an interesting fashion on either side with only a single loop pointing upwards, and the hanging end closely attached to the garment. The folds of the garment are indicated by thick projections rather than by double parallel lines. The fold of the hem of the garment at the point above the ankles is characteristically heavy. The tucking up of an end of the garment, on the left waist in a gentle curve is graceful. Above all the modelling is of a high order and the finish is smooth and charming. In spite of the erect posture, the delineation of the facial features and the treatment of the lines are such as to make the figure pulsate with life and it is, therefore, an exceedingly fine example of the art of the period. The absence of the long *hāra* in the *yajñopavīta* and of the knot with bows in the waist-band coupled with the comparatively simple but effective workmanship in this bronze makes it earlier in date than the following Maitreya.

Fig 28 The gold-plated Maitreya from Melayūr in the Tanjore District belongs, in all probability to the same period as the above figure, or to a slightly later period. It measures 39·5 *cm* high. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran has given a description of it.[1] Though it is fairly complete, the following additional particulars are given to make it fuller.

Though the figure is stated to be erect, a closer examination of it reveals that it is in *ābhaṅga* posture i.e. with a slight flexion in the body. It is indicated by the asymmetrical disposition of the feet as well as by the subtle forward inclination of the bust. That this is so may be easily seen when this figure is compared with all the previous bronzes representing Vishṇu, which are undoubtedly erect. The introduction of this new element of rhythm is, we believe, a forward step taken by the *sthapati* from the norm, although it is also quite likely that the innovation was necessitated by the theme.

Secondly all the details of this figure are worked in great relief and consequently the facial features too are sharp. They are expressive of wonder and in this, this figure seems to follow suit the previous example. The delineation in both of them of the eye-brows and eyelids are more or less in the same style except for their greater sharpness here.

Thirdly the *karaṇḍa*-topped *kirīṭa* of the former, probably, has paved the way for the beautiful *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of this figure.

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *The Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, p. 52, Pl. XVIII (2), (3).

The *yajñopavita* is probably of pearl and does not show any clasp. It is akin to that of Vishṇu (Fig. 21) examined above. Here the upper smaller subsidiary strand is absent while the lower longer strand is shown in an interesting manner. It is thick throughout and goes into the lower garment in front, but at the back (Fig. 29) it is shown going over the garment. This feature is akin to that of Vishṇu (Fig. 15) where this strand is shown over the garment both sides, and its end joins the neck at the back side, while it is quite unlike that of other Vishṇus where the strand goes inside the garment on both sides. This novelty coupled with his attempt at the introduction of the element of rhythm mentioned above, shows unmistakably the high artistic capability of the *sthapati*.

Fourthly, the *kaṇṭhī* with festoons is worked beautifully. Its prototypes are several but its similarity to the *kaṇṭhī* of Vishṇu (Fig. 15) and the Trivandrum bronze discussed above is noteworthy. There are examples of stone sculpture where this kind of necklet is seen, e.g., the *dvārapālas* of the Vijayālayacholeśvara[1] and the Vishṇu[2] of the Vīraṭṭāṇeśvara temple of Tiruttaṇi. The occurrence of this type of *kaṇṭhī* in Javanese and Nālandā sculptures seems, therefore, to be due to common artistic traditions that obtained among the *sthapatis* of the period. Behind the *kuṇḍalas* are seen the curly strands of hair. The *keyūras* and the *valayas* too are slightly more evolved than in the previous bronze. Similar is the case with *udara-bandha*.

Coming to the lower garment, the waist-band, the *uttarīya*, etc., are worked with criss-cross patterns which are new to the piece. The bows on the *kaṭi-sūtra* are elegant, and its knot is simple as in all the bronzes of the period, and *simha-mukha* knot which is a later innovation is not present. It has a gem-set centre and goes twice round the waist with a beautiful knot in the second band and its long ends with bulbous finial hang gracefully on either side. The *uttarīya* likewise goes twice round, showing more evolved bow decorations on either side and forming a beautiful loop in front, which is, however, in the style of those of earlier Vishṇus. Noteworthy is the fan-wise depiction of the end of lower garment tucked in at the right side. The garment itself is thick, probably the counterpart of Vishṇu's *pītāmbara*, and has parallel lines very much similar to those of the Vishṇus (Figs. 23, 25), but more prominent than in them.

The hands, as in the previous examples, are short, and the shoulders are normal and their treatment is rather refined. The modelling of the torso here, is very graceful which is heightened by the exquisite rendering of the fold of the stomach. From this side the rounded nature of the figure is easily seen. But as will be shown presently the archaic

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (1955), Fig. 84.
[2] G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, Vol. II, Pl. VII (3).

treatment of the portion below the waist at the back and the beautiful curves of the lines of the sides are characteristic of sculptures of this period and are not met with in the examples of subsequent periods.[1]

Fig. 29 At the back of the figure we see the *makuṭa* beautifully worked. The *śiraś-cakra* is worked in the form of a full-blown lotus, with a central projection, also worked like a rosette, from which hangs a beaded string. The hair as usual is in two rows of curly strands, but, unlike in the case of previous examples where the space separating the two rows is much, here it is significantly less. At the centre is a hole which was probably intended for fixing the figure to a *prabhā*. The long subsidiary strand of the *yajñopavīta* that is seen going over the garment on this side is seen to be made apparently of thin pleated gold wires, and it joins, as mentioned above, the main strand of *yajñopavīta*. Interesting are the details of the garment and the sash. Especially noteworthy are the horizontally running parallel lines of the garment. Their sway, particularly noticeable in those on the buttocks of the figure, remarkably suggests the rounded nature of this part the absence of which from the bronzes discussed above suggesting the flatness of the part in them. That even in this bronze, which has been executed almost in the round, the earlier tradition of showing the portion below the waist flat lingers, is apparent from the manner of treatment of the portion from below the thighs. The depiction of the end of the garment tucked in the middle of the waist here is somewhat mannered but yet its workmanship is artistic.

It is this view that shows the *ābhaṅga* posture of the bronze better than the front view; and it is suggested by the slight bend introduced at the left knee. Up above, the back is treated completely in the round and its plastic qualities are enhanced not only by the smoothly curving elbows but also by the beautiful lines of the sides which still continue to display such features of rhythm and symmetry as are characteristic of the sculptures of earlier periods. It is thus one of the best examples of South Indian bronzes, noted for beautiful proportions, fine plastic qualities, tasteful decorations, charming posture and delicate treatment: indeed it is a masterpiece. Above all the *padmāsana* which is visible only in this side, it being chamfered in front, is apparently a work of art by itself. The rendering of each petal is highly realistic. The high relief and extreme clarity of details of the figure characterise this *āsana* too. So far, only two specimens of this kind of *āsana* have been examined by us. This is the third one, and its treatment is definitely different from and more advanced than that of the other two. While we noticed the beginning of the double lotus *motif* in the Indian Museum

[1] Therefore, the possibility of its belonging to the 10th century is ruled out. (Contra. *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 77, No. 330). Neither is it possible to assign this to 700-730 A.D. as has been done in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 19.

Vishṇu (Fig. 19) which suggests a certain amount of hesitation on the part of the *sthapati* who made that, here the *motif* has assumed a definite character and has thus set a standard for similar *āsanas* belonging to later periods.

It must be noted here that though the lotus *motif* of the *padmāsana* too plays a part in the bronzes, and its evolution is likely to throw some light on the age of specimens of which the dates are doubtful, yet the variety of ways in which it is rendered in different bronzes of the same period and of the school make us pause for a while when we deal with it. The difficulty becomes greater when the original *āsanas* of bronzes are substituted by later ones, as has happened in the case of several examples. This is due to the fact that usually the pedestals are hollow and are therefore easily damaged. Since in almost all the bronzes their pedestals are separately made and attached to them, the substitution becomes easier. A remarkable instance of this is the pedestal of the famous Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa (Fig. 164). It is interesting to note that in this bronze Maitreya the pedestal forms a part of the figure itself, having been moulded and cast with it. Hence it is also solid. That this is also an ancient tradition will be apparent when we recall that the previous two pedestals are also made in the same manner although they are not solid. Making the pedestal separately, seems, therefore, to be a later-day innovation.

This figure is also a specimen of bronze cast solid. In fact from this period onwards casting images solid became popular; and this feature indicates from the point of view of the economic life of the people of those periods, the ushering in of prosperity. That the period was really prosperous is testified to by another interesting detail of this figure, namely its gold-plating, and its silver inlaid eyes.

From the above discussion it is clear that this bronze is an excellent specimen belonging to a slightly later period than the above figure and that this may be assigned to the middle of the ninth century. Its small size may be also noted, because none of the bronzes that we have examined above are hardly a foot high, this specimen being one of the tallest, measuring 39.5 *cm* high.

It represents Maitreya and the broken left hand might have held a *kalaśa*.

This bronze was found at Melayūr near Tiruvāli, the native place of Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār in the Shiyali Taluk of the Tanjore District, which is about 30 miles from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam along the sea coast to the north. According to Mr. T. N. Ramachandran this "stands for the popularity of Buddhism outside Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and shows that there were votaries of the Buddha even further north as there were further south."

The standing Vishṇu[1] has features which are further evolved from those of the previous bronze. It is also said to belong to Peruntoṭṭam. The *kirīṭa* is short and Fig. 30

[1] *Lalit Kalā*, No. 7, Pl. VII d.

the stud on it is small; for the first time two *kaṇṭhīs* are seen to adorn the neck; the thickness of the *yajñopavīta* is continued but it does not go over the arm; the upper subsidiary strand is also broad; the lower strand goes beneath the lower garment and, at the back, joins the main strand; the *Śrīvatsa* mark is very pronounced and it is probably in the symbolic form of Śrī; the neck is short; the shoulder is not powerful; the main hands, which upto now have been shown as parallel to the sides of the torso, are here in an angle to them; the arms are in fact shorter than in the previous examples; the upper arms definitely make an angle with the main arms at their elbows; as in other examples, the emblems are held by the first two fingers; the *cakra* is held with its axle facing the spectator and its spokes and rim are worked in detail; the *keyūras* and *valayas* are simple; the right hand for the first time is in *abhaya* pose with the mark of a lotus on the palm; and the left hand is in the *kaṭy-avalambita* pose.

That its lower garment of yellow silk (*pītāmbara*) is evolved is seen by the series of four-line horizontal bands running parallel to one another. There are three closely tied bands of the sash on the waist. There is no knot of *kaṭi-sūtra* but the ends are small and not looped. The tucked up end on the left side is shown with frills; and it is a new development. There is no big loop in front, but instead there is a wide-looped festoon hanging from the lowest band of sash, on each leg, from which in turn a tassel hangs vertically, and there is also a similar one hanging between the legs. The characteristic thick fold of garment is seen at the ankles. The bows and the end of *uttarīya* on either side are also elaborately worked. Anklets are present.

It must be noted that the face is somewhat crude and it is neither oval, nor square, nor elongated but seems to project out.

Fig. 31 Regarding the back side of the figure, the *śiraś-cakra* is comparatively small, and the curls of hair, in two rows are worked like a pattern, which is rather not quite naturalistic. The features such as the wide space between the torso and the hands, the ornate workmanship of the waist-bands, and the lines of the garment are all highly developed. The slim stature is also noteworthy because sculptures of the period assume this shape. Here, for the first time, the modelling of the entire figure, including the portion below the waist, seems to be in the round. Except for the face and the arms which are delineated in a poor style, the figure is characterised by refined proportions and delicacy of treatment and somewhat restrained decorative embellishments. On the grounds of these factors, it may be dated to about the end of the second quarter of the 9th century A.D.

So far as we know, only upto this bronze the traditions of art, particularly of bronzes, of the Tamil-Pallava period can be recognised in their pristine form. Subsequent to this

period great changes were taking place in the political life of the people and consequently in other walks of their life also. The power of the Pallava rulers became slowly circumscribed and restricted to the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, the region to its south being ruled over by a few royal families such as the Muttarayars of Vallam and the Veḷirs of Koḍumbāḷūr. They were feudatories who attached themselves to one of the two powerful dynasties namely the Pāṇḍyas and the Pallavas whichever was for the time being supreme. So, the works of art, for that matter all other evidences bearing on the life of the people of this part of India of this period, may be said to be contributions made under the aegis of any one of these dynasties. But the sudden emergence on the South Indian political horizon of the luminous family namely the Choḷa dynasty during this period, which not only began with such brilliance as could overpower the lights of other dynasties but also could soon rise to the zenith so that its effulgence and power extended for the benefit of a wide area, brought about a great reformation in the field of art too, as it did in other fields of human activity. While continuing the traditions of art and culture of the past, this dynasty brought to bear on them vigour and strength of a sublime order with the result the works of art of this period were characterised by sincerity, devotion, purposefulness and above all by refinement and beauty. In short, they were truly creative in character. Owing to the fact that the carrying over of the traditions and their complete transformation by the Choḷas, took some time, there was naturally a period of transition. It is proposed to call this period as the Pallava-Choḷa transition period and the bronzes which we assign, in this book, to that period are also called by the same name.

Before proceeding further, let us briefly summarise the salient features of the examples of bronzes of the Tamil-Pallava period.

While the Āndhra-Pallava bronzes hail from the Guṇṭūr-Kṛishṇā region, all the Tamil-Pallava bronzes most probably belong to the Shiyali-Mayavaram region which is the heart of the Choḷamaṇḍalam. These are all small figures of Vishṇu except for the Maitreya; but the latter has too many points of correspondence with the former.

Thus we may not be wrong if we say, till bronzes representing various other deities belonging to this period are found, that they did not become popular or important in the scheme of temple worship, except in the case of the Buddhist *vihāra* of Nāgapaṭṭiṇam although no bronzes of this *vihāra* belonging to this period are reported to have come down. Even when more and more bronzes began to be made, the demand for bronzes of Vishṇu seems to have been great, or rather the only bronzes made. The reason for this, probably, is that it was in the Vishṇu temples that the rituals relating to worship of *pratimās* in metal also began to be practised widely. It is also likely that, judging from the size of the images, they were made for worship by orthodox Vaishṇavites in their

houses. Of these the former view seems to be to us more plausible because along with large images, the temples used to possess a collection of small bronzes also, as testified to by the numerous treasure-trove collections consisting of such mixed groups of bronzes.

BRONZES OF THE PALLAVA-CHOḶA TRANSITION PERIOD

In the middle of the 9th century A.D. profound changes were taking place in the political history of South India, the most significant of them all were the waning of the Pallava power and the laying of the foundation of the Choḷa kingdom at Tanjore. The Pallavas lingered on for half a century or more during which the Choḷas gradually extended their sway. The Choḷa kings who were responsible for this state of affairs were Parakesari Vijayālaya (*c.* 850–870 A.D.) and his son Rājakesari Āditya I (*c.* 870–907 A.D.). Āditya was at first the ally of the Pallava king Aparājita, but subsequently overthrew him and annexed the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam to his kingdom.[1] Earlier, Vijayālaya himself is said to have taken possession of Tanjore in the neighbourhood of which were the Muttarayars then. That there was no settled political life even in 904 A.D. is known from "a record of Śaka 826 (A.D. 904) from Kappalur (North Arcot) omitting all mention of a ruling sovereign and registering a gift to a local temple by a chieftain."[2] But the conditions changed since the time of Parāntaka I (*c.* 907–955 A.D.). Professor Sastri says that "Parāntaka's rule was one of increasing success and prosperity."[3] So upto about this king's accession will be the period covered here.

Notwithstanding the unsettled political condition this period is marked by cultural activities of a high order. During the first quarter of the 9th century lived the famous Sundaramūrti-nāyanār the last of the sixtythree Śaiva saints. Like his two other great predecessors namely Appar and Sambandar, Sundara propagated Śaivism through his immortal hymns in Tamil. The effects of his endeavours were felt more and more as time passed. So, many temples to Śiva were built during the transition period, of which the most interesting is the Vīraṭṭāneśvara at Tiruttaṇi built during the time of Aparājita Pallava, by Nambi Appi.[4] The Choḷas being Śaivites, the two kings of this period namely Vijayālaya and Āditya I were greatly inspired by the hymns of the *Nāyanmārs* mentioned above and therefore arranged to build a number of temples. To Vijayālaya's time is assigned the Vijayālayacholeśvara at Nārttāmalai in Pudukkottai, and Āditya I is credited with having studded both the banks of the Kāverī with

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[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (1955), pp. 110 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[4] G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 17.

stone temples to Śiva.[1] Besides these, temples to Vishṇu and to the deities of other faiths might have been also built during this period. The rulers of the period do not seem to have been bigoted sectarians; for instance such an ardent Śaivite as Āditya I is said to have been given the *biruda* of Kodaṇḍarāma[2] and it is in some of the temples which belong most probably to his time, that we find beautiful bas-relief sculptures of miniature size depicting scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa and the Bhāgavata.

Temple building activities presuppose the development of temple rituals including festivals which required idols in metal.

So, the art of bronzes too entered on a new career in this period. As mentioned above, the kings of this period being catholic in their outlook, may be said to have extended their patronage equally to all the religious institutions and temples; hence we find that there are examples of bronzes representing gods and goddesses of Śaivism, Vaishṇavism and Buddhism. But that it was Śaivism that was more dominant then than the other faiths is clear from the fact that almost all the bronzes dealt with here as of this period are representations of Śiva. Since it was only in this period that these activities were infused with vigour and vitality, their results are also distinguished by these qualities. Indeed some of the magnificent bronzes–for that matter specimens of stone sculpture too—of South India belong to this period. Speaking about the earliest phase of the renewed activity in regard to the bronzes of South India Mr. John Irwin says, "The first revolutionary advance in South Indian bronze–casting comes during the eighth or early ninth centuries, and results in the emergence of entirely new qualities in such figures as the Śiva Tripurāntaka (Fig. 32)." Further on he says, "the skill involved in the making of these images suggests that bronze–casting had by now become a highly specialised craft."[3] These observations are true except for the difference in the period. According to us the period of these activities lay after about the middle of the 9th century while Mr. Irwin attributes them to the eighth or early ninth centuries. That our hypothesis in this regard is more probable will be known as we proceed.

Of all the bronzes that may be assigned to this period, the Tripurāntaka ht. 64 *cm* seems to be the earliest. In size this is larger than all the figures examined above and the workmanship of a majority of other details of this piece shows certainly an advancement over that of similar details met with in them. Just like the bronzes discussed immediately above, this is also apparently solid. On account of these facts this may be dated to about the middle of the 9th century A.D. This being one of the very few early bronzes representing Śaivite themes, it is reasonable to expect in it one or two

Fig. 32

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 113.
[3] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 67.

details in archaic style. A clear description of it is given in *The Art of India and Pakistan*.[1]

Though it is nearly full, yet the additional particulars given below are necessary to appreciate the importance of the bronze better. Its *jaṭāmakuṭa* is very simple compared to those of the rest. On its front is seen the beginning of an ornament which at a later period became universal not only as an ornament for the *makuṭas* but also as an embellishment of the *keyūras*. It is the knob-like thing with three prongs above and tassels below. Curiously there is no suggestion of a skull and the place occupied by the knob here, is usually reserved for it in other bronzes representing Śiva.

The face is oval; the eye-brows are done ridge-like; the eyelids are thick; the nose is long and somewhat snub; the lips are thick with a slight emphasis on the lower one and the lines of the ears are smooth and gently flowing. The features of the face are suggestive of supreme self absorption.

The neck is high and there is a groove incised round it. There is a *kaṇṭhī* with a thick boss from which hangs a pendant, in the middle. There is also a *hāra* of Rudrāksha berries. Its occurrence here as well as in several other bronzes of decidely early date representing Śiva's various aspects such as Somāskanda (Fig. 36) and Vīṇādhara (Fig. 38) may be taken as a clear indication of the fact that the pendent *hāra* has been one of the characteristics of images of Śiva, just as the pendent strand of *yajñopavīta* in the Vishṇu images. So the doubts of the authors of the *Catalogue* expressed in this matter while they dealt with the Naṭeśa figure[1] (Fig. 164) from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu may be given up.

The *yajñopavīta* is ribbon-like with a knot on the left chest from which the ends hang gracefully. It stands probably for the *vastra-yajñopavīta*. The *udara-bandha* too is broad and thick. The shoulders are high and rounded. The nipples are of thick circles. The arms are attached in a solid manner. They are adorned with a simple band of a piece of cloth (?) with knot outside. A pair of *valayas* are found on each wrist. The treatment of the torso and the arms is rather rugged; and it is noteworthy that the elbows are treated with a certain amount of angularity a feature noticed for the first time here. But the fingers of both hands are rendered with consummate skill, and the gestures throb with life.

The drawers are also simple and smooth and do not bear any lines or folds. The knot and the bows of the girdle are apparently remeniscent of similar ones met with in

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 69, No. 305.
[2] *Catalogue*, pp. 110–11.

Vishṇu (Fig. 25). It must be noted that the simple ornamental clasp (*kaṭi-sūtra-granthi*) of this bronze develops into *simha-mukha* motif in later bronzes.

It is in the depiction of the sash that the *sthapati* seems to have put his heart and soul. All the specimens examined upto now show the sashes in somewhat a conventionalised manner except perhaps the Vishṇu of the Madras Museum (Fig. 25). While here the sashes, like other bands, are also simple and devoid of decorations, yet the slight lengthening of and the sway introduced in, the lowest of them are really master strokes which have made this figure a magnificent one. The bows and the flowing ends are likewise simple and beautiful. The treatment of the legs is again superb. Here it is, that one sees for the first time a conscious attempt at emphasising the rythm, as shown by the right leg being erect and the left one slightly bent and advanced in front, an attempt which has succeeded tremendously, and one which has profoundly affected the character of the whole figure. The slight contraction of the line of the left leg is felt throughout the body and the figure seems to move gently in studied steps assuming now a slight but graceful *bhaṅga* which is more than that found in the Maitreya (Fig. 28) but which is little compared to the *bhaṅgas* of such figures as the Kirātamūrti from Tiruveṭkalam (Fig. 44). This posture is in fact a necessary concomitant of the theme represented by the figure and therefore a convention. But yet the amazing nature of its execution proves beyond a shadow of doubt the fact that no convention or restriction or rules or regulations of any kind will daunt an artist of a high calibre and supreme concentration.[1]

Now to the back side of the bronze. The grandeur of the *jaṭāmakuṭa* is seen only on this side. The braided hair is divided into two sections the upper section is tied up in a high crown, and the lower section consisting of ten long braids, hangs gracefully on the neck; and the line of demarcation between them is beautifully indicated by the flowery band. The *śiraś-cakra* is obviously in the same style as that of the Maitreya figure but while in the latter it is vivacious and a bit ornate, here it is, quite in keeping with the rest of the details, highly restrained. The treatment of the wavy braids, below the *śiraś-cakra*, is indeed another proof for the superb skill of the *sthapati*. Fig. 33

[1] In fact the very conventions seem to have helped the *sthapatis* who were responsible for such bronzes as the present one to show off their remarkable talents in a masterly manner. There is therefore no substance in the view that it was the rules of iconometry etc. of the *Āgamas*, that were responsible for stifling the capacity of *sthapatis* and stultifying their creative faculties. On the contrary, the details of architecture and sculpture dealt with in a meticulously careful manner and elaboration in such texts cannot be considered as productions of a special class of priests but in all probability, were works of a special class of teacher-cum-*sthapatis* (Ṛishi-artists) possessing deep knowledge of the subject and a vast practical experience. Inferior works of art are, therefore, products of inexperienced hands actuated by insufficiently equipped mind rather than the products of artists whose imagination was circumscribed by the rules of the *Āgamas* and *Śilpa* texts.

A word about the treatment of the braids seems necessary. In this as well as in some of the bronzes discussed immediately after this, the braids are long and they do not show any curlings, although the deeper and shorter waves of the ends of the braids of these figures themselves have all the necessary potentialities. The bronzes with curly braids of hair are therefore later than these. This feature seems to have developed in this manner only in Śaivite bronzes. For, in all the bronzes noticed above, which have been assigned to an earlier period than the one to which this Śaivite bronze is assigned, the hair is shown already in curly strands. But, as has been argued there, the presence of this feature alone cannot alter the conclusions regarding their dates which have been arrived at by the force of the evidence of the style of a great majority of other details. While this may be plausible in the case of the Vaishṇavite and Buddhist bronzes owing to the fact that the practice of worship of metal image most probably started earlier with the followers of these faiths, the simplicity of treatment of the braids of hair of the Śaivite bronzes of this period and its gradual evolution in course of time, were probably due to the fact that this practice began to be popular with the Śaivites only from this period. That the depiction of the strand of hair in a simple manner does not militate against the attribution of these images to a period later than that to which the above-discussed Vaishṇavite and other images are assigned, is borne out by the fact that in the present case almost all the other details are comparatively more evolved including the size of the figure and the technique of its casting.

Reverting to the description, not only the simplicity of the hanging braids of hair is pleasing but their division into a group of five on each side, leaving a wider space between the groups than between each braid, is quite artistic because it is introduced here undoubtedly to accentuate the pleasing effect by means of beautiful balancing. It is interesting to note that the vacant space between the two sets of braids is found to be filled by a leaf-like pendant in the bronzes to be discussed below and its absence here is indicative of the age of the bronze. The tucked up end of the cloth is not prominent here. The waist-bands and the *uttarīya* are comparatively less pronounced, but the loop hanging in front is seen through the legs. The view from this side of the postures of the arms and the legs is magnificent.

No wonder therefore that Mr. John Irwin goes into raptures over this bronze. He says, "Here is a masterpiece which stands in its own right as a *modelled* image. It is as though the limbs of the rock-cut figures have changed their substance: the symbol has become a thing of flesh and blood. The bronze is conceived as a shape in sharply defined cubic space, unlike the rock-cut figures which were conceived in organic relation to their matrix, the rock. The emphasis is now on poise and dramatic tension, and

whereas texture was all-important to the rock-sculptor, here texture plays no part. Every detail is treated with a view to cumulative effect. The tassels and the median loop of the sash, which in the stone figures receive only formal treatment, are here invested with a tension and grace of their own and contribute to the total effect. The wavy lines of the sacred cord carried the movement upwards and helps to offset the poise of head and hand."[1]

The date of this bronze has been given in *The Art of India and Pakistan* as '9th century' in the catalogue portion (p. 60) but as 'late 9th century A.D.' against the illustration on Pl. 48, Fig. 305. Though no one can be and is certain about the date of any bronzes with the exception of a negligibly small number of examples containing dated inscriptions on them, it would be better not to be ambiguous about one's own conclusions on the matter. It is apparent that the above mentioned double dating suffers, to some extent, from vagueness. In view of the fact that the details of this bronze are closely allied to those of the Maitreya (Fig. 28) this may be assigned to about the middle of the 9th century A.D. and it is therefore one of the earliest specimens of the Pallava-Chola transition period.[2]

This bronze is of interest iconographically too. Rarely are representations of Śiva shown with two arms only. This two-armed Tripurāntaka is therefore interesting. But that there was in the 8th-9th centuries, a practice of showing this aspect of Śiva with two arms only is known from the remarkable Tripurāntaka from Ellora. Below we will be examining another fine bronze representing Śiva as Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44) which also shows only two arms. Further on, a magnificent representation of Śiva as Vṛishāntika (Fig. 128) also with only two arms is discussed. The significance of this feature is difficult to understand, but the option given to the *sthapatis* to show such representations of Śiva either with two arms or with four arms, suggests that in these instances, probably artistic considerations alone should be taken into account.[3]

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 67.

[2] The date of 700–30 A.D. given to this by Karl Khandalavala in *Marg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 19, is too early and from our study it will be seen that this piece belongs to the Pallava-Chola transition period.

[3] Another point is worth mentioning in this connection. Since there is a close correspondence in conception and iconographic details between a number of images of the Śaivite and Vaishṇative pantheons, it is likely that the two-armed Śivas correspond to two-armed Rāmas and Kṛishṇas. The Tripurāntaka and the Kirātamūrti bronzes being representations of Śiva as archer *par excellence* may, therefore, be taken to correspond with figures of Rāma the archer of archers who broke in twain the bow of Śiva. But it is necessary to record here the fact that all the stone or bronze representations of Rāma known so far from South India being later than this Tripurāntaka and the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44) bronzes discussed here, we believe that probably the latter images served as prototypes for the former ones, especially in bronze.

Fig. 34 The Naṭeśa from Kūram, ht. 53 *cm*, br. 29 *cm*, comes next in point of time. Its details are as follows:

A heavy, almost cylindrical *jaṭā-makuṭa*, with a knob-like thing representing a flower at its top and with a skull in front, a *Dātura* flower on left, crescent moon on the top right, snakes and a *paṭṭa* below are found on the head. The face is oval and the third eye is seen on the forehead. The features seem to have been rubbed off. The eyebrows and eyes and the lips are indicated by lines. The expression is indicative of seriousness and wonder. The earlobes are long; the right ear is adorned with a *makara-kuṇḍala*. The neck is high, and there are three necklets close together, the lowest of them having a big gem in the middle. The *yajñopavīta* is in three strands, with a beautiful knot on the left chest. The *udara-bandha* is broad. There are four arms. The shoulders are thick and there are a few strands of hair on them and the chest is wide with the nipples shown as thick circles attached to it. Two types of armlets are shown. The two front arms have an armlet each which consists of a gem-set band with a leaf-like design having a thick circular thing in its centre. The two other arms have each a pair of *valayas*. There are three *valayas* on the wrists. The arms are done in a peculiar manner in which those of some of the Vishṇu images are worked.

A *ḍamaru* in the upper right hand and a serpent in the upper left are seen. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left is in *gaja-hasta* poses. The similarity between the finger of this image and those of the last but one of the Vishṇus discussed above, is worth noting. Further the arms are treated like tubes and all angularities are rounded off. The attachment of the arm to the shoulder is in the usual archaic style. The modelling of the torso is fine as are the lines of the sides. The slight bend to the right adds greatly to the beauty of the figure.

Shorts with beautiful borders are worn in the place of lower garment. The waist-band has a knot bearing a *simha-mukha* knot from which thick, folded ends of cloth hang down, and a ribbon-like end goes up in a curve on either side. The *uttarīya* is in two broad sashes which are folded. The lower one hangs down in a broad loop, a characteristic met with in the bronzes examined before the Tripurāntaka. A beautiful bow with a pair of flowing ends is shown on either side; the ends are decorated with horizontal bands of three parallel lines and show wavy tips.

There is the end of the cloth projecting out above the waist-band on the left. The legs are also treated in the same manner as the arms, and wherever bends and curves occur, they are done as though the material is clay. Such a treatment is seen especially in the first Vishṇu (Fig. 15). Similarly that the sculptor was following the ancient traditions is suggested by the characteristic manner in which the parting of the legs is done.

The details of the feet are not clear. There are *pādasaras* on the ankles. The right leg is extremely well done and is planted on the dwarf representing Apasmāra who is shown like a trampled frog, struggling for life, with the expression in the uplifted face, suggesting agony. The left leg is bent at the knee and lifted up. The dwarf lies on a rectangular pedestal which has a pair of spikes to carry a *prabhā*. The *padmāsana* is absent.

The back side shows, as in the above figure, clearly the features of the *jaṭā-makuṭa*. Unlike that of the Tripurāntaka, here there is the suggestion of the ends of a few *jaṭās* projecting out either side. A beautifully done *śiraś-cakra*, very much like that of the above figure is seen here. Six long braided locks hang over the back and shoulders. They are very boldly done, and their wavy lines enhance the beauty of the back. Interestingly enough in the vacant space between the two sets of braided locks is found traces of a pendant, hanging from the neck. The bows and flowing ends of *uttarīya* and the bands in the waist are clearly seen here, and their workmanship is obviously evolved. But the modelling of the buttocks is archaic, and the beauty of the treatment of the limbs is well brought out on this side. Fig. 35

Now comparing the features of this bronze with those of the Tripurāntaka, the following well-marked differences between them are found.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* of Naṭeśa is ornate; the eye-brows, eye-lids and the lips are shown by incised lines; there are three lines on the neck; the necklaces, the *yajñopavīta* and the armlets are also ornate. The drawers and sashes are decorated with bands and their folds are clearly suggested by lines. The most interesting element is the *simha-mukha* of the *kaṭi-sūtra* which, being probably the earliest of its kind seen on the metal figures, seems to be only suggested, rather than clearly delineated as in the case of Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38). While there is no curl of hair falling on the shoulders on the front side of the Tripurāntaka, here a pair of them is seen on each shoulder. The details of the backside are extremely illustrative of the fact that this bronze is later than the Tripurāntaka. The most remarkable of these is the pendant hanging between the braided locks, a feature which is conspicuously absent from the latter figure but found as a rule in the bronzes to be examined below.

In regard to the modelling, it is bolder here than in the other one, notwithstanding the fact that the angularities are rounded off and the details of the hands and the feet are less clear, features which are somewhat akin to those found in the earlier Vishṇu bronzes. Above all, amongst the figures with *bhaṅgas*, an innovation which is a deviation from the earlier traditions of showing images in a rigidly erect posture and in a completely frontal position, the earliest example, examined so far, is the Maitreya in *ābhaṅga* posture (Fig. 28) which is followed by the Tripurāntaka with greater flexion. But this Naṭeśa is easily the

most interesting of them all. The very theme of the bronze necessitates the depiction of *ati-bhaṅga*, but the restraint and control exercised in delineating the dynamic action by the sculptor of this piece make it a superb specimen, hardly equalled by any other of its kind. And it is the earliest bronze Naṭeśa known.

It is also interesting from the point of view of its provenance. It comes from Kūram in the Chingleput District. It is a place of historical importance where there is the famous structural temple to Śiva in apsidal form built during the time of Parameśvara-varman I Pallava (*c.* 630–68 A.D.) and where was found a copper-plate grant belonging to his period. This temple seems to have been endowed with metal images of Śiva at a time when the whole of Tamilnāḍ was ringing with the hymns of the Śaivite saints, whose importance was made known by Sundaramūrti in his *Tiruttoṇḍattogai*. Probably this was one of the very first metal images donated to the temple. Interestingly it is of Naṭeśa. This place being very near to Kāñchīpuram where there is the renowned Kailāsanātha temple adorned with exquisite sculptures of themes from the *Śiva-purāṇa* particularly with a number of dancing Śiva sculptures, it is but natural that the member of the royal dynasty responsible for the donation of this, commissioned the *sthapati* to do a figure of Śiva in his dancing aspect. Various interesting modes of dance of Śiva form the themes for the sculptures in the Kailāsanātha temple. Here was a *sthapati* who, while working on the subject, had produced as if due to a flash in his mind a unique bronze representing the *ūrdhva-jānu* pose. Providing a *padmāsana* and a permanent *prabhāvaḷi* for images of Śiva not being found in the early bronzes, here too they are absent.

That this bronze is only slightly later than the Tripurāntaka is apparent. It may therefore be assigned to about the third quarter of the 9th century and not to about 900 A. D., as given in the book *The Art of India and Pakistan* on p. 67, and against Fig. 304 of Plate 48[1]; and it represents the *ūrdhva-jānu* mode.[2]

Fig. 36 Immediately after the above, comes the remarkable bronze representing the group called Somāskanda *i.e.*, Śiva with Umā and Skanda (ht. of Śiva 19, 28 *cm*; ht. of

[1] The date of late 8th century or early 9th century A. D., given to it in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, is difficult to agree with for the reasons we have stated above.

[2] The identification of this figure as *ūrdhva-jānu* Naṭeśa given originally in *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VI, p. 16, was changed to *Tala-samsphoṭita* in *Indian Art and Letters*, Vol. XII, No. 2, 1938, and this has been adopted in the book *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 69, with approval. While the mode of dance may approximate to the Bharata's *karaṇa* of the same name, the absence of power required for effectively demonstrating this *karaṇa* in this example, the presence on the other hand, of a subtle balancing of the posture on one leg while holding the other leg with its knee bent, in the mid air, and the depiction of the arms in the usual poses, go to prove that this is a figure answering the *dhyāna* of the *Śilpa* text given by S. Gopalachari in his article in the *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VI, mentioned above, as well as the description of the *ūrdhva-jānu karaṇa*, rather than answering the *Tala-samsphoṭita karaṇa* of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. Hence the figure may be called as Śiva in the *ūrdhva-jānu* posture.

Pārvatī 14, 23 *cm*) from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu. Unfortunately the figure of Skanda is missing from it. It is interesting to note here that while the bronzes dealt with so far, were each a representation of a single deity, here we have for the first time a group displaying the skill and capacity of a South Indian sculptor in creating such remarkable studies in composition as this, in the round. From a study of this group not only do we know about the course that the traditions of this art took in representing Śiva — for that matter a perfect man — but also about the manner of portraying Umā (Pārvatī) or a perfect woman. It is really a pity that the figure of Skanda is missing; for were it also preserved we could have had an idea about the way a baby-god — *i. e.*, a typical human baby was represented in bronze. There are several examples of this group in stone in bas-relief in various temples of the Pallava period; and hundreds of them in bronze belonging to the Choḷa and subsequent periods.

But this piece, belonging to the transition period, when the art of bronzes reached its zenith of development, illustrates this development in all its glory in a succinct and scintillating manner which no other specimen is seen to do. Hence it richly deserves to be called not merely as a masterpiece but a gem of a bronze.

Now in order to know where exactly its position lies, it is necessary to describe it fully. A description of it is given in the *Catalogue* on p. 107. The following particulars may be added to it.

On the *jaṭā-makuṭa* is the ornament with prongs, enclosing the skull, and it is more prominent and evolved than that of the Tripurāntaka. The face is almost round and its features are very pronounced. The nose, the eyes, the lips and the mouth all seem to have been modelled by hand. There are two *kaṇṭhīs* (necklets) and a *hāra* (necklace) on the neck. The lower *kaṇṭhī* is embellished with a pendant flanked by a tassel on either side. It is remarkably akin to that of Tripurāntaka. The long *hāra* is also of the same variety as the one found on that bronze. Thus there is here an additional *kaṇṭhī*. This is, however, not mentioned by the authors of the *Catalogue*. The *yajñopavīta* seems to be of plaited gold wires, with a knot on the left chest, and the *udara-bandha* is braided and gem-set and has a big clasp in front. Unlike any of the bronzes examined so far, the nipples of this figure are done as though they are pressed-out globules attached to the chest; and this applique method is peculiar to this bronze.

The modelling of the torso is rather slender and cylinder-like; nevertheless its contours and the lines of its sides are characteristic of the sculptures of the transition period.

For the first time the *keyūras* are of the type called *nāga-valaya*. This type is found used in later figures, too, side by side with the type of armlet consisting of a band decorated

with a knob from which shoot up vertically short slender prongs, which is similar to the ornament seen on the headdress of the bronze under study.

The knot in the waist-band is ornate but does not show any *simha-mukha*. There are, however, the curved strands which start from this knot and go behind. On the drawers are beautiful creeper designs between vertical lines. This type of drawers is in advance over that of the Naṭeśa from Kūram.

The workmanship of the loop of the *uttarīya* and the two ends of the girdle is beautiful. It may be noted that unlike the Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38) to be noticed below, here the two girdle ends are shown one over the other.

The treatment of the arms and the legs is exactly in the same style as that of the Kūram Naṭeśa but it is a little more refined than in the case of the previous two bronzes. The legs are especially noteworthy. Their modelling is undoubtedly smooth and rounded, and the poses in which they are kept are easy and graceful. That these qualities are distinctly superior to those of Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38) are apparent.

On the back, as in other bronzes, the details of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* are clear.
Fig. 37 There are six locks of braided hair, divided into two groups, with a large pendant in between. This ornament is also boldly executed. It may be remembered here that the beginnings of this feature have already been met with in the above Naṭeśa. The upper arms are bifurcating from the lower ones in sharp angles, which is obviously an evolved feature. The bands of the sashes and the ornamental bows are also easily seen from this side.

The pose in which Śiva is seated is called the *sukhāsana* pose. But unlike the pose of such bronzes as Śiva as *sukhāsana* (No. 1 of the *Catalogue*, p. 100), it is majestic in the present instance, the slight inclination, towards back, of the bust creating all the difference. In this as well as in several other respects this bronze compares extremely well with the magnificent Bhikshāṭanamūrti [1] of the Nāgeśvara temple of Kumbhakoṇam.

Now to the figure of Umā. There is a conical *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* on the head, decorated with the same kind of ornament met with in the Śiva figure. The face is round and the features are sharp and graceful. The neck is high and there are three necklaces on it. No trace of *māṅgalya-sūtra* is seen in this figure. Curls of hair fall on the shoulders which, though round and high, are smoothly and beautifully done. The breasts are full and sensuous, a characteristic of sculptures of women of this period, most typical and beautiful

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (1955), Pl. XIX, Fig. 53.

examples of which are the figures of women,[1] of the Nāgeśvara temple, Kumbhakoṇam. The modelling of the abdomen and the hips is extremely realistic while a certain amount of exaggeration is introduced in the depiction of the limbs, particularly legs which are too slender and therefore seem to be slightly disproportionate, in spite of their extreme tenderness and grace. We may say that this slight exaggeration reveals the fact that the *sthapati* was also a great poet besides being an artist. In this connection this fact is worth remembering, namely, that all the women of the sculptures from Amarāvatī,[2] and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa,[3] are of this tall and slender-limbed type of which the royal women[4] occurring in the panels of portrait sculptures at Mahābalipuram are directly derived. This bronze is, therefore, a specimen which illustrates the continuance of early traditions of the art of South India. The diaphanous nature of the *dukūla* or the garment shown clinging closely to the body is a special characteristic of the early sculptures. Moreover, the absence of any lines on it intended to suggest its folds, is also another characteristic of sculptures of women not only from Mahābalipuram and Amarāvatī but also from such a place as Tiruvirāmīśvaram, Tanjore District.[5] From a slightly later period onwards this characteristic begins to appear in the garment, first in horizontal lines running parallel to each other with much space in between *e.g.*, the women sculptures from the Nāgeśvara temple, Kumbhakoṇam, and later on with lines shown close to each other. And still later the garment is shown with decorative designs on it. Thus, the manner of depiction of the garment of this Umā also suggests an early date for the figure. The hem of the garment, the central bunch, the loop of the sash and the ornamental bows are all executed beautifully.

The back view of Umā is all the more splendid and the details met with here make it an outstanding specimen of the art. The most noteworthy of them are the beautiful *makuṭa* with an equally fine *śiraś-cakra* attached to it, the wonderfully wrought braids of hair gently swinging hither and tither, the *yajñopavīta*, the waist-bands and the tucked-up end of the cloth. Above all, the excellence of the modelling is apparent from the fine proportions of the torso and the hips.

Lastly the *bhadrāsana* on which the figures are seated shows interesting details. It was customary to show the figures of deities only on *bhadrāsana* in early sculptures (*e.g.*, Naṭeśa from Kūram) and no *padmāsana* is found between it and the figures. This bronze is another example illustrating the practice. Further the mouldings of this *āsana* are very simple except for a few floral decorations seen on the perpendicular

[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XIII, Figs. 24-27.
[2] C. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvatī Sculptures in the Madras Museum*, Pl. XXXVI.
[3] A. H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl. XXI (a), etc.
[4] T. G. Aravamuthan, *Portrait Sculpture of South India*, Figs. 2, 3.
[5] C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical and Chronogical factors in Indian Iconography*, Pl. XX B.

spacers occurring in the prominent depression. In later bronzes, even where no *padmāsana* is found, not only are the mouldings more evolved but there is a projection in front, *e.g.*, Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38). In order to support the right foot of Śiva and the left foot of Umā a double-lotus design, in high relief, is found under each.

As regards the date of the bronze it is interesting to note that though the learned authors of the *Catalogue* have acclaimed this piece as 'unusual and rather striking' and have noted that it is 'much the smallest Somāskanda in the collection' they have judiciously avoided assigning it to any date, omitting to include it among bronzes of Choḷa type even, by not marking it with either an asterisk or sword mark by which they have distinguished bronzes 'of Choḷa type' and 'more doubtful specimens that seem to be allied to them' respectively (*ibid.*, p. 47). Similarly they have not also indicated any date to the Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38) with which this Somāskanda is associated in more than one place and dealt with by them in appreciative terms about their style. This is rather surprising but is apparently quite in keeping with the authors' professed hypothesis that "..... metal images are associated with processions and it was under the Choḷa kings that this side of temple activities was specially developed, which no doubt accounts for the fact that no Hindu metal image is known that can be definitely proved to be Pallava." (*Ibid.*, p. 25). The reason for the omission to mention the necklets of the Śiva of this bronze group from its description and the consequent avoidance of bringing their importance and significance to bear on the long discussion on necklaces by the authors (*ibid.*, pp. 34–40) is also not known.

In the booklet entitled *Illustrations of Indian Sculpture Mostly Southern* of the Madras Museum, however, this bronze, illustrated on Pl. XXXII, is rightly assigned to the Pallava-Choḷa transition period. But the more definite dating suggested by the expression there, namely, '9th century A.D.' can be changed to a still more precise date. In the light of the above discussion its date may be somewhere about the beginning of the second half of the 9th century A.D. This dating gets support from the manner in which and the positions of the emblems are held. So, the date "*circa* second half of the 8th century A.D." assigned to it by Mr. Karl Khandalavala in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 19, may have to be modified.

The study of the above bronze leads us on to the consideration of the famous Fig. 38 Vishāpaharaṇa from Kīḻappūdanūr next. It has been dealt with in the *Catalogue* on p. 108; but its description there, is rather not full. In *The Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 70) its description is fuller. A passing reference has been made to this bronze in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, page 19. But in order to show its proper place in the chronological sequence the following description of it seems called for.

The high *jaṭā-makuṭa* is conical, which is distinctly a step in advance over the workmanship of the crown of all the bronzes dealt with so far. There is a *Dātura* flower, moulded in the round on its left side, and an imperfect crescent, apparently also designed in the round, on the right, near the top. There is the interesting and significant ornament showing a thick knob surmounted by prong-like projections. That the ornament has gradually become more popular at the time when this bronze was produced is easily seen by its repetition on the arms of this figure also, where its details are clear-cut. The fillet around the head is narrow. The face is round and its features are more evolved than those of the face of the Somāskanda (Fig. 36) bronze described above. The third eye is particularly well marked; the ridges of the eye-brows are not so high; the eyes seem to be in a sunken place. The nose is done in a manner similar to that of the Tripurāntaka figure (Fig. 32). The lips are slender and not thick and the expression in the face does not convey joy.

The neck is high and there are two necklaces. "The inner of the two necklaces is very broad and plain. The outer one appears to have been designed with an ornamental centre-piece, but its surface is now quite smooth."[1] Here is an instance of the omission of the long *hāra* from a figure of Śiva as in the case of Naṭeśa from Kūram (Fig. 34). But it must be noted that here the two necklaces are more developed than those of the previous examples. The *udara-bandha* is broad and is decorated with a 'diamond-cum-rosette' pattern. The *yajñopavīta* "is divided into three, its broad central portion being looped over the right forearm." The strand which goes above is also comparatively broad while the lower longer one is slender. There is here the clasp over the left chest, which has assumed the addorsed bell shape with a beautiful knot from which hangs gracefully an end of the thread. It is to be noted here that while the central strand goes over the fore-arm, which is a characteristic feature of some of the sculptures of the Pallava period in general yet, as in the case of the necklaces, it too has developed, like the clasp mentioned just above. More important than this are the few lines that run along the course of the strand obviously intended to suggest the folds of the *yajñopavīta* which is therefore made of *vastra* (cloth). An anticipation of this detail is found in the sashes of the Naṭeśa from Kūram but there it stopped with them. However, here it occurs along with the folds of the drawers which form quite a new element and which are conspicuous by their absence in the figures so far examined. Further here are found the new type of *keyūra* mentioned above, the sharply tapering conical headdress with the *keyūra* type of ornament on it, developed facial features and other highly evolved details to be mentioned presently. Hence, the presence of the characteristic namely the sacred cord

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 108.

going over the fore-arm alone cannot be construed as a piece of evidence to decide the issue of the date of the bronze. For, a similar treatment of the *yajñopavīta* is found in the marvellous Trivikrama (Fig. 53) which is undoubtedly a later work. Just as the slenderness of modelling of the Umā in the privious bronze group has been taken to be an echo of earlier traditions so also the style in which the *yajñopavīta* is done in the present bronze as well as in the Trivikrama bronze is simply an echo of earlier traditions.

The torso of this figure is thicker than that of the Śiva of Somāskanda, but continues to display the beautiful modelling characteristic of the sculpture of this period, and the lines of its side are in curves which are delineated with consummate skill. The chest is broad but nipples are not so prominent as those of the Śiva of Somāskanda discussed above or of the leg reversed Naṭeśa (Fig. 54) to be dealt with below. The shoulders are comparatively normal. Serpentine locks of hair and a flower beautify each shoulder.

There are four arms, the upper ones bifurcating from the elbows. The characteristic *keyūras* mentioned above, are seen on the arms and a pair of *valayas* on the wrists. A technical advancement is perceptible in the manner in which the arms, on either side, are made to adhere to the body. While the circumference of this joint seems to be large in the bronzes discussed so far, here it appears to be comparatively little. Further, there is difference in treatment between the fore-arm and the portion above it. While the former is slender and sharply tapering towards the wrist, the upper portion is heavy and tube-like. In the bronzes noticed up till now such a sharp difference in treatment between these two portions of arms has not been met with except perhaps in the Somāskanda (Fig. 36) where a beginning of this feature is seen.

A *paraśu*, much more evolved than that held by the Śiva of Somāskanda, and a deer are held in the upper hands, not between the first two fingers of the hands; the lower portions of these emblems are attached to these fingers inside. This is again a new feature. There is a flower-like thing in the palm of the lower right hand standing for the poison and the lower left hand holds a rising-up serpent with spread-out hood, executed in a highly beautiful manner.

The details of the lower part of the figure are all the more interesting. For the first time the folds of the drawers are suggested, not by means of lines characteristic of the bronzes of the previous period but by means of modelled elevations and depressions. The feature being in its early stage of development in this bronze, the space between two successive elavations is much, whereas, as will be shown below, in later bronzes this space gradually becomes narrow. In the famous sculptures from

Nāgeśvara temple, Kumbhakoṇam, this feature is in a slightly advanced stage.[1] Secondly the sashes are broad and are shown not only with lines suggesting folds but with diamond-cum-rosette pattern. Above the bows on either side is seen an end of the *uttarīya* which seems to be in three strips. Another end of the *uttarīya* is made to hang down on either side of the knees and in front of the pedestal. Besides, the broad loop is worked on the pedestal itself while the two beautiful ends of the waist-band are seen just below the left foot. This may be said to have been derived from the same detail found in the Somāskanda (Fig. 36). Then there is the *kaṭi-sūtra* (waist-band) with a highly developed *siṁha-mukha* of which the hesitant beginning was noticed in the Naṭeśa from Kūram (Fig. 34). Unlike in the case of the latter, the *siṁha-mukha* does not eject any cloth; on the other hand, the ends of the former bows are seen to take their origin from the *siṁha-mukha*. Moreover, the thread that is shown on either side of the knot, as going up in a curve and then falling again down to follow the course of the waist-band, is here shown more or less like thin curved horns springing from the lion-head. There are *pādasaras* on the feet. The modelling of the leg is again interesting. The rounded feature of the legs of the previous bronzes is being imperceptibly changed to show their bony contours. The erect pose in exceedingly fine but the dignified bearing of the Śiva of the Somāskanda group is apparently absent from this specimen.

At the back there is a *śiraś-cakra* which is also of quite a new type, not met with so far. It is done in the form of a wheel with spokes bound by an ornamental rim. 'Fifteen long braided locks hang over the back,' the braids being thinner than those of the previous figures. Unlike the latter, here the pendant, hanging from the neck, is covered by a lock, probably because the *sthapati* found it difficult to divide the large number of locks leaving sufficient space for the pendant to show out separately. The style of the locks of hair of this figure is another important characteristic bearing on its date. The other details of the back are, as usual, clearly seen. Fig. 39

The *āsana* on which the figure is seated in *sukhāsana* pose is like that of the Somāskanda figure, *i.e.*, a *bhadrāsana* without the *padmāsana*. But it is higher and its mouldings are more developed than the other, of which the rounded *kumuda* and the spacious *paṭṭi* are noteworthy. There are spikes here. A definite proof for its later date than that of the previous bronze is afforded by the projection of the central portion of the *āsana*. This is again an important feature seen for the first time in this piece. The hanging right foot is supported on a small double-lotus rest. In view of the fact that the details of this bronze closely follow those of the Somāskanda, this may be

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (1955), Figs. 28, 43.

assigned to a date slightly later than that of Somāskanda. Therefore the date *circa* 9th–10th century A.D. given to it in *The Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 70, Pl. 49, Fig. 306) seems to be a little too late; and the date of Pallava period, 600–850 A.D. given to it in *Illustrations of Indian Sculpture Mostly Southern* of the Madras Museum (Pl. XXX) is too wide and vague. It will now be clear that the statement of Mr. Karl Khandalavala regarding the importance of the bronze and its date given in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 19, requires modification.

Fig. 40 The Vīṇādharamūrti in the Tanjore Art Gallery seems to carry the story of the art a step further.

It is a standing figure in the *ābhaṅga* pose. The studied restraint with which the posture is executed makes the bronze a remarkable specimen of a study in elegant poise. It is the very first thing to attract the attention of the beholder. The comparatively sparse but tasteful ornamentation, the slender but forceful modelling, the beautiful postures of the arms and above all the features of the face suggesting in a remarkable manner the supreme power and divine composure are really in the true Pallava traditions. In all these and particularly in the high refinement of treatment, this bronze seems to vie with the Tripurāntaka bronze (Fig. 32).

The high *jaṭā-makuṭa* bears on its right side a *Dātura* flower and a small crescent on the left side high up near the top. The *keyūra*-like ornament provided with beautiful tassels below, adorn the front side of the *makuṭa*. There is the *paṭṭa* round the head. The face is oval, and its features seem to be in the same style as that of the Vishāpaharaṇa discussed above.

There is a *makara-kuṇḍala* in the left ear and a large *patra-kuṇḍala* in the right ear. The reversal of the order in the wearing of the *kuṇḍalas* is noteworthy. There are a number of other sculptures where the *patra-kuṇḍala* is found in the right ear; *e.g.*, Bhikshāṭana[1] (stone) of the Nāgeśvara temple at Kumbhakoṇam, Dakshiṇāmūrti[2] (stone) from Kāveripākkam, Vīṇādhara[3] (stone) from Koḍumbāḷūr, the Kirātamūrti[4] (bronze) from Tiruveṭkaḷam discussed below (Fig. 44), and the seated Śiva[5] (stone) in the Madras Museum. From the fact that a majority of these sculptures belong more or less to the period with which we are concerned here and the aspects of Śiva that these represent are not the same, it seems that at that time the *patra-kuṇḍala* was displayed both in the right ear as well as in the left ear. The restriction of this ear-ring exclusively to the left ear was perhaps a later imposition by the developed Śaivite theology. In this connection it

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 53.
[2] *Ibid.*, Fig. 52.
[3] *Ibid.*, Fig. 38.
[4] *Journal of the Annamalai University*, Vol. III, No. 1, Fig. 1.
[5] C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical and Chronological factors in Indian Iconography*, p. 26, text Fig. 8.

is worth remembering the first verse sung by the baby-saint Tirujñānasambandar (mid-seventh century A.D.) after having been suckled by Pārvatī. It starts with the wonderful phrase in praise of Śiva, namely, *Toḍuḍaiya Śeviyaṉ*[1] (literally 'man with woman's ear-ring) which is exactly the equivalent of Ardhanārī, *i.e.*, half man and half woman, (Ammaiappaṉ in Tamil) where there is obviously no reference to any particular ear in which the *toḍu* (woman's ear-ring) was worn by Śiva. Coming back to the bronze its neck is high and a simple, but stiff *kaṇṭhī* with a thick gem in the middle and a pendant, is all that is found on it. There is also a groove round it. A beautifully curving *yajñopavīta* in three strands with a double-bell clasp and a charming knot is found on the body. The display of the longer strand hanging vertically against the *udara-bandha* as if bisecting it and by the side of the curves of the other two strands, creates the effect of a beautiful *jāla* or mesh which effectively sets off the beauty of the otherwise plain trunk of the figure. The *udara-bandha* is decorated with floral designs.

The modelling of the torso is exceedingly fine, which while preserving the purity of the line of the left side as in other bronzes, has given a stress in that of the right side making the figure look grander owing to this change. This pressure on one side is obviously only slight and is brought about by the *ābhaṅga* posture in which there is the suggestion of a slight movement of the body as is seen here in the left leg which is not firm, compared to the right leg, and, therefore, is in the act of moving. The shoulders are normal and a pair of ringlets of hair falls on each of them. On the arms are seen the *nāga-valaya*, while a set of three grooved *valayas* are on each wrist. The upper arms are bifurcate from the elbows in a narrow but sharp angle. Tha emblem held in the right hand is missing, while a deer is seen in the corrosponding left hand. This deer is supported by a strut which should have been normally removed from there. The lower right hand is in the posture of manipulating the strings of the *vīṇā* and the left hand is in the posture of holding it.

The figure wears a pair of drawers decorated with simple creeper designs. The waist-band has the knot in front which shows a more stylistic *siṁha-mukha*. From each end of its mouth issues forth a bow enclosing a knob between them. The horn-like thread, after a deep curve, becomes a band on the waist. There is also another band beside it. The style of the legs is similar to that of Śiva of Somāskanda rather than that of the Vishāpaharaṇa, but here the hip is somewhat narrow. The absence of heaviness of this part seems to add to the gracefulness of the *bhaṅga*, because massiveness of this part is likely to affect the smooth course of the flowing lines on either side. A slight exaggeration seems to characterise the legs but it does not in any way distract the beauty of the figure, brought out by its good proportions. As has been mentioned above,

1 *Devāram*, First Tirumurai, Shiyali Padigam, *verse* 1.

the right leg is firmly planted while the left leg is relaxed perhaps for taking a first step. There are *pādasaras* on the feet. The figure stands now on a circular plate only.

Fig. 41 The back view of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* shows the matted hair arranged somewhat stylistically. The *śiraś-cakra* is missing. There are twelve long locks of hair twisted at their ends hanging on the back and shoulders. This feature is specially noteworthy because this is perhaps the first bronze male figure of this series where this feature makes its appearance. It will be immediately understood that this is the stage to which the locks of the previous examples were developing. It may be remembered here that the ringlets of hair are already seen in the figure of Umā of the Somāskanda group (Fig. 36) discussed above. Here the twisted locks are arranged beautifully in a semicircular shape with sufficient space in between two of them. It may be mentioned, in passing, that in later figures not only the rings become larger in size and number, but also closer to each other, ultimately assuming a wig-like form. It will, therefore, be clear that here the twisted form of locks is in its early stage of development. There is a suggestion here of the presence of the usual pendant, but it is not clear. The arms are considerably away from the body especially the left arms. The *nāga-valaya* armlet is seen on this side too. The three bands of the waist are clearly seen. It is only from this side that all the grace of modelling and the beauty of the lines can be appreciated fully.

Fig. 42 The bronze representing Śiva seated in the *sukhāsana* pose will be found to be almost similar to the Vīṇādhara discussed above It is now in the Tanjore Art Gallery. It seems to have formed a Somāskanda or Umā-sahita group. But the other figures or figure are missing. The noteworthy features of the front view are the high *jaṭā-makuṭa*, the simple *kaṇṭhī* and *hāra*, the flowing *yajñopavīta*, the simple garment and emblems and the beautiful modelling of the torso, arms and legs. The prominent *patra-kuṇḍala*-like ear-ring in the left ear and a different *kuṇḍala* in the right ear are also interesting to note.

Fig. 43 The significant details that mark the back view are the high *makuṭa* with the twisted locks of hair looped in a natural manner, the rather unpretentious *śiraś-cakra* and the bows on either side and the tucked-up end seen in the middle of the waist-band. The most important detail, however, to be noted here is the big pendant which hangs from the back of neck. This special characteristic together with the other details which are, as mentioned above, akin to those of the previous figure helps to ascribe this bronze also to the last quarter of the 9th century A.D.

As the style of this figure is reminiscent of that of the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 32) and the details are slightly more evolved than those of the Vishāpaharaṇa it may be dated to about the beginning of the last quarter of the 9th century A.D. Its size is also characteristic of the period.

The two remarkable bronzes, one representing Śiva as Kirātamūrti and the other Arjuna, from Tiruveṭkaḷam, Chidambaram Taluk, South Arcot District next claim our attention on account of the stage of development their details display. A late Pārvati image was found along with these two, which will be dealt in its proper place. These have formed the subject of an excellent paper by Professor T. B. Nayar, published in the *Journal of the Annamalai University*, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 28-47. Recently Mr. T. N. Ramachandran also has dealt with these three images in his monograph on the *Kirātārjunīyam or Arjuna's penance in Indian Art* (J. I. S. O. A., Vol. XVIII, pp. 90-94). Prof. Nayar's descriptions of them are nearly exhaustive. We reproduce them below with pleasure.

"The image of Kirātamūrti[1] is 23.2" high, is made of copper and cast solid, *cire perdue* wise. Fig. 44

"The matted hair is tied in *jaṭā-makuṭa*. There is neither snake, nor skull visible in it, but it is adorned with a row of garlands. The flowers making up the garlands are worked realistically and appear to be *arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*). These represent the very garlands which Arjuna placed on his improvised earthen *liṅga*. Below the row of garlands is a narrow floral band. The arrangement of the matted hair defeats comparison. While it will be conceded that it is the most perfect form of *jaṭā-makuṭa*, it is unlike the *jaṭā-makuṭa* in any known image of Śiva. On top of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* there is a four petal-formation with a central knob crowning it. The same motive is repeated on either side of the garland, but with the central knob very much flattened out. Just above the forehead there is an ornamental band, taken round and tied at the back in an elegant knob. Locks of hair extremely realistic in their formation fall down the neck at the back, two of them fall on to the front, one on each shoulder.

"He wears a *patra-kuṇḍala* in his right ear and there is no ear-ornament in the left. Śiva in most of his forms wears a *makara-kuṇḍala* in his right ear and a *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left. Here the departure seems to have been intentional, to add force to the disguise[2].

"The tip of the nose shows signs of having been damaged and very cleverly repaired.

"He has a single necklace with beaded ornament in front. It is tied at the back close to the neck and through the locks can be seen its tassel, flat and heart-shaped.

"His *yajñopavīta* or sacred thread consists of three strands which sre quite distinct at the back. They are tied in front in a knot the ends of which rest on the side of the

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1 Prof. Nayar has rightly pointed out the appropriateness of calling this image as Kirātamūrti rather than Kirātārjunamūrti. Hence this name is used here, instead of the other name. (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

2 See discussion under Vīṇādhara bronze dealt with above (pp. 68–69) for our explanation of this feature.

chest. He has neither *keyūra* armlet nor *udara-bandha*, that band in between the waist and chest, a common adjunct in South Indian images. A single *valaya* adorns his wrist. He has rings on his thumb, fore-finger, ring-finger and little finger.

"He wears a loin-cloth which is tightly wrapped and kept in position by means of a decorated belt or girdle. The clasp of the belt only very faintly suggests a *simha-mukha*.[1] Below the belt at the back is seen two parallel strings. The one nearest to the belt passes underneath the lower ends of the clasp and the other passes over it in front. One end of the loin-cloth is taken behind the two parallel strings at the back and the other falls from the belt in front in a neat little fold between the legs. The arrangement of loin-cloth lends the image a singular charm. We do not find it repeated on any other South Indian metal image.

"There is a crack in his right leg, just below the calf, but it is skilfully cemented.

"He wears a *pādasara* on his foot below the ankle and a ring each on the big toe.

"He stands in *ābhaṅga*[2] pose with the weight of his body resting on his left leg. His right arm is raised at right angles in the gesture of holding the arrow and the left arm is raised vertically from the plane of the shoulder in the gesture of holding the top of a bow. He is a being who is conscious of his supreme strength but does not make a show of it. There is a singular charm, a freedom and ease in the way he stands.....

.....

.....

"The image is mounted on a pedestal, a low *padmāsana* which is fixed on to the centre of a rectangular metal-slab, having two square sockets on either end.

"There is a *tiruvāśi* or *prabhā-maṇḍala* an oval ring fringed with the tongues of flame, surrounding the image and attached to the ends of the rectangular slab immediately behind the sockets. The tongues of flame on the outer edge of the *tiruvāśi* are portrayed realistically and there is a symmetry in their arrangement with nine on either side. One on the left is broken off. The central flame, right over the head of Kirātamūrti, is much larger than the rest and underneath it is the same floral motive that is found on top of the *jaṭā-makuṭa*. The raised left hand of the image is fixed to the inner side of the *tiruvāśi*. The image with its rectangular slab to which its pedestal is attached, and the *tiruvāśi* fits into a detachable stand. The stand has two holes bored through its thickness so as to allow for the insertion of two rods that will facilitate the set being carried when in procession. The rectangular metal-slab fits exceedingly well into the stand and it is quite

[1] It is, on the contrary, clearly seen in the figure.

[2] The *bhaṅga* here is certainly *tri-bhaṅga*. Bronzes in *ābhaṅga* are *e.g.*, Maitreya (Fig. 28) and Vīṇādhara (Fig. 40).

possible that the stand is contemporary with the rest. In fact, the image of Kirātamūrti with its *tiruvāśi* and the two images which the square sockets were meant originally to receive cannot have stood erect without the support of the stand."

The back view shows the charming manner of dressing the hair, the fourteen curly strands with the broad pendant hanging in the middle, the simple *yajñopavīta;* the characteristically tucked-up end of the loin-cloth and the garcefully flowing waves of the loin-cloth. The splendid nature of the modelling of the limbs and the fine pose are seen to advantage on this side. Fig. 45

In this bronze the following features stand out as new when compared with the bronzes noticed above.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* itself is more developed, and the flower on top of it being shown especially more pronounced than that of Naṭeśa from Kūram.

The face is slowly changing from its elongate or oval form to more round and square form that is characteristic of bronzes of the subsequent periods. And the features of the face of this bronze are more marked than those of either Vishāpaharaṇa or Naṭeśa or Tripurāntaka; the treatment of the eyes and the ears show especial refinement.

The ringlets of hair falling on the back, the pendant ornament there, and the *simha-mukha* clasp on the girdle are all markedly in a stage slightly more developed than that of the previous bronzes.

Particularly noteworthy and significant, is the treatment of loin-cloth. The modelling of it in the form of waves in such pronounced manner is seen for the first time only here, although its beginnings have been noticed already in the Vishāpaharaṇa[1](Fig. 38). This feature seems to have been a fashion adopted by sculptors of this period as exemplified by the Vishṇu and Brahmā sculptures of the Tiruttaṇi temple,[2] which belong to the end of the 9th century.[3] It must however be mentioned here that the treatment of the garment in these sculptures is stiffer than in the case of the sculptures from the Nāgeśvara temple, Kumbhakoṇam which are slightly earlier than these. There the folds are only indicated by means of slight, widely spaced and gracefully curving projections on the garment which appear to be linear in character. This fact shows that the Kumbhakoṇam sculptures form one of the very early groups where the beginning of this kind of treatment of the cloth is noticed. A regular bronze piece showing a slightly more developed stage of this feature is the Vishāpaharaṇa, while the Tiruttaṇi sculptures show the feature in its still

[1] Of course, the garment of Gaṅgādhara of the Gaṅgāvataraṇa panel (G. Jouveau Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, Vol. I, Pl. I), from Trichinopoly also shows bold folds of this type, but it seems to be an exception, for hardly there is any other example of this period where this feature is observed.

[2] G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, Vol. II, Pl. VII (3), and VIII.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

more developed form. Now in the case of the bronze under discussion, this feature is apparently a step in advance over the Tiruttaṇi figures. This is amply borne out also by the developed *siṁha-mukha* motif.

The modelling of the sculpture is completely and fully in the round and shows unmistakably the wide strides that the traditions of the art of this period had taken. The mastery of the *sthapatis* over the entire gamut of modelling of plastic form, their extreme confidence in grappling with a medium where desired results are difficult to achieve and above all their genius in making their works breathe with life are all displayed in an amazing manner by this bronze. It is indeed a unique specimen of South Indian bronze and a real marvel at that. It is, however, necessary to mention that the slim feature of earlier figures is absent in this and it is somewhat heavy. Nevertheless the proportions of the sculpture are kept at a high level.

Coming to the pedestal, a few additional details are at once noticed. First of all, the actual pedestal on which the figure stands is a simple rectangular metal tablet; and it is loosely fitted into a big *bhadrāsana*.[1] It is interesting to note that in so far as the Śaivite bronzes of this period are concerned only in this bronze there is a *padmāsana* beneath the feet of the figure. Though it is intended to be an example of a double-lotus yet only the lower series of petals is prominently seen, the upper series or more truly the calyx of the flower on which the figure stands being only slightly indicated. The *padmāsana* is very low and this is indicative of its early stage of development. That the *bhadrāsana* is certainly later than that of Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38) is known not only from the larger size and more developed moulding but also by the greater depth and prominence of the projection seen in the central part of its front side, than in the other example.

Most interesting of the details of this figure is its *prabhāvaḷī*. In the case of several bronzes examined above, spikes to receive a *prabhāvaḷī* are seen. Being loose, the *prabhāvaḷīs* of those bronzes have unfortunately not survived. In this instance, which was also dug out from a place near the temple, fortunately the *prabhāvaḷī* has been preserved, that too almost intact. It thus becomes the earliest extant example of a *prabhāvaḷī* and its importance and significance for the study of the development of the *prabhāvaḷī motif* cannot therefore be exaggerated. As the *prabhāvaḷīs* have had an interesting course of development, the stage of development of a *prabhāvaḷī* of a particular piece of sculpture, when taken together with that of the other details is seen to afford a clue to the chronological position of that piece.

[1] Another example of this type of fixture is seen in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa (Fig. 164) where however the loose pedestal is a *padmāsana*.

Reverting to our bronze, the form of its *prabhāvaḷi* is quite simple. It has the shape of a real arch supported on solid and almost vertical props which are thick at the base and taper towards the top. It must be noted that the bases of the props are simple and do not show any motifs like *makara-mukha*, as is seen in such bronzes as the beautiful Naṭeśa of the Big Temple of Tanjore (Fig. 137). The flames that fringe the *prabhā* on its outer side are simple and beautiful and they show three tongues each. Three-tongued flames seem to have been the *motif* employed in the *prabhās* for a long time after this. Secondly their number is small here and consequently the spacing of them could be done in a pleasing manner unlike the crowded flames of the *prabhās* of images of later periods. The crowning flame is in fact not a flame but a half blossomed lotus of which the first row of petals, worked in an elegant manner, is seen on the rim. It is hardly necessary to say that this detail discloses the remarkable ability and ingenuity of the master artist, who could convert any given *motif* or theme into a real piece of art and make it serve equally well the purposes of the religion as well as the requirements of aesthetics.

Thus every one of the details of this figure suggests that the *sthapati* who was responble for this figure had, when he created this splendid bronze, a sound knowledge of the traditions of art that obtained then and probably knew also examples of sculpture like those of Vishāpaharaṇa and the Vīṇādhara made according to those traditions. As he was apparently a gifted man, he improved upon the traditions and brought to bear upon them a rare artistic insight with the result his work displays features which, while continuing a good many details found in the previous examples, include quite a few very significant original elements which on account of their vitality and substantiality had since become prototypes for later works.

On the above mentioned grounds the figure may be assigned to the last quarter of the 9th century A.D., or to the end of the century. The learned author of the article on the set of bronzes, including this, had ably argued for an early 7th century date for this bronze. Chief points that he puts forth are firstly the Kirātamūrti is simple and is not according to the elaborate iconographical description of the figure found in the *Kāraṇāgama* and "an image of Kirātamūrti, which is different from what the *Kāraṇāgama* describes it ought to be, must be placed anterior to its date."[1] Regarding the date of this *Āgama* he does not say anything specific. But from the following passage, it is clear that a date later than Sundaramūrti-nāyanār's which is about the first half of the ninth century A.D., is probably what he means. It is this: "The *Āgamas* have been assigned mainly to between the ninth and twelfth centuries after Christ. They must be dated most of them, certainly later than the period of the Śaivite saints, for they insist on

[1] T.B. Nayar, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

the recital of the *Devāram* songs composed by Appar, Sambandar, and Sundaramūrti."[1] In order to decide how much the figure was 'anterior to' the *Kāraṇāgama*, Prof. Nayar brings in the point that Appar, the Śaiva saint a contemporary of Mahendravarman I Pallava of the early seventh century A. D., when he visited this place and sung hymns in praise of Śiva in this temple, associated the temple with the particular form of Śiva as hunter, and that had he not seen a visible form of this aspect of Śiva he could not have called the temple "the abode of *Veṭaṇār* (hunter) and that the bronze image in question was probably the one saint Appar saw."

Thirdly to prove the above hypothesis he then institutes a comparison between this bronze and early Pallava sculptures, especially the magnificent Gaṅgādhara panel of Pallava Mahendravarman I's time from Tiruchirappalli. His comparison of this with the Tiruchirappalli panel stops with this namely that two figures of the latter as well as the Gaṅgādharamūrti of Elephanta have each a single necklace which is similar to that of this bronze.

Fourthly he says: "In its elongated body, combining grace with strength, in its supreme elegance of composition with the chest so naturally merging into the abdomen, we are very strongly reminded of the Pallava sculptures ....."

The *Āgamas* may be dated to between the 7th and 12th centuries, but the probable date of any one of them is a matter of conjecture. The *Kāraṇāgama* contains matter that belongs to periods much earlier than the 7th century A. D. So it does not necessarily follow that the sculpture in question is an early work. Secondly Appar was most probably referring to the presiding deity of the temple by the word *Veṭaṇār* because even today, Śiva of the temple is called Pāśupateśvarar (which may be taken to mean 'the lord possessing the weapon of Pāśupata', a special aspect in which he is also called as *Kirāta* in Sanskrit or *Veḍaṉ* in Tamil). It is also possible that there were representations of this aspect of Śiva in stone or wood in the temple at the time Appar visited the place, which he saw. It is even possible that there was a different metal image representing this aspect. And to call this bronze as the one seen by Appar requires therefore more substantial evidence than has been given by Prof. Nayar. For, even the third and fourth pieces of evidence given by him do not prove anything, because the occurrence of a single necklace of a type in a group of sculptures cannot be taken to prove that all of them belong to the same date. Nor does what the Professor has said in regard to the similarity of modelling etc., between this bronze and the Gaṅgādhara of Tiruchirappalli bear scrutiny because there seems to be more dissimilarities between them than similarities, *e.g.*, as has been said above this bronze is rather squat and heavy than elongate. Even according to the Professor himself, "An experienced eye can always detect that 'inexplicable some-

[1] *Loc. cit.*

thing' which connects the one with the other. Sculpture in stone and sculpture in metal are intimately connected and from what we know of the history of Indian sculpture, Indian craftsmen working in one material have worked with equal skill in another material (*e.g.*, an inscription on the southern gateway of the great *stūpa* at Sanchi records that one of its jambs was made by the ivory-carvers of the city of Vidiśā)..... in any period in the history of Indian art there must have been an *intimate relation between sculpture in stone and sculpture in metal.*[1] The spirit is the same that runs through both belonging to the same period and the decorative details of the one are bound to be repeated in the other."[2] After pronouncing this statement which rings with truth pure and simple and with which we are in complete agreement, the identification of the style of this bronze with that of Gaṅgādhara from Tiruchirappalli on the basis of a superficial similarity of one or two details between them, without taking into account their other details, seems to defeat the very purpose of the statement.

In this connection the statement of Prof. Nayar namely that the *simha-mukha* on the waist-band is only faintly suggested, is worth recalling because this *simha-mukha* is seen in sculptures belonging to late Pallava and subsequent periods. We have noticed its emergence only in the Kūrm Naṭeśa.

On the other hand as we have said above, a majority of the details of this figure including its modelling and large size are of the 9th century. Hence our assigning the bronze to that date. In the light of this Mr. Ramachandran's dating also requires modification.[3]

Now to the Arjuna figure of this group. Again we had better give its description by Professor Nayar. Fig. 46

"It is 17·7" high as stated above and like the image of Kirātamūrti it is made of copper, solid and cast *cire perdue* wise.....

.....

He wears a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* rather peculiar in its ornamentation and defeating comparison. Attached to its lower end at the back there is a projecting wheel-like structure.[4] From below the headdress locks of hair, worked less realistically than those of Kirātamūrti, fall down the nape of the neck.....

"He wears heavy ear-ornaments (*makara–kuṇḍalas*) which remind us of certain Pallava sculptures. He has a broad, almost circular, necklace with a series of pendants attached to it. On his trunk are a *yajñopavīta*, consisting of three beaded strands,

1 Italics is ours.

2 T. B. Nayar, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

3 *Kirātārjunīyam in Indian Art*, pp. 92, 94.

4 I.e., *śiraś-cakra*.

udara-bandha and a cross-band. Two quivers are fixed along the cross-band at the back and in front from the middle of it hangs a vertical branch that disappears into the waist cloth. He has an arm-band or *keyūra* on each arm with a four-lobed flower attached to it in front. This flower motive is rather interesting. It appears on his headdress fixed as a badge in the middle of it in front. The same motive, but cut half, is attached to the ends of the ear-ornaments. It appears also on Kirātamūrti's *jaṭā-makuṭa*, one on either side of the garland. He has a wristlet round each wrist and rings on his thumb, fore-finger and little finger.

"He wears a loin-cloth tightly wrapped and kept in position by means of three bands arranged one below the other. The first of these three gives in front the appearance of a knot with its two ends falling down and backwards over the second. The third and the lowest is taken across the second and first and gets fused with the scheme of the knot. Altogether there is no suggestion at all of the conventional *siṁha-mukha* in the arrangement of two sashes; and two long pieces of cloth, taken together twice round the hips so as to leave a loop in front and a bow and two sash-ends on either side, the shorter one immediately above it and the longer reaching down along the leg almost to the ankle are seen.....

"The treatment of the loin-cloth is not so realistic as in the case of Kirātamūrti while in front its folds are shown in the manner of Kirātamūrti, wave upon wave, behind they are indicated by means of rough lines. The end of the cloth is taken backwards and comes out between the first and the second of the three waist bands. The other end drops over the loop in the sash.

"He wears an anklet each on his foot and rings on the big and small toes.

"His hands are in *añjali* pose and the flexion of the body is *ābhaṅga*.[1]

"The image is skilfully incorporated into a new pedestal ....." [2]

A few more details require to be added to the above description. The *makuṭa* can be, now, compared with the *makuṭa* of Vishṇu (Fig. 30), dealt with above. Both in form and decoration, the present one is certainly an improvement over the latter and has apparently paved the way for still more elaborately done *kirīṭa* of such figures as Trivikrama (Fig. 53) to be discussed below. Amongst the additions to the *kirīṭa* may be mentioned the bands, the finial and the distinctly pronounced ornament with prongs shooting up from it found on all the sides except the back. Particularly noteworthy is the curved bands on the two sides that enclose these ornaments, which

[1] Here again the *bhaṅga* is not *ābhaṅga* but *tri-bhaṅga*.
[2] T. B. Nayar, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

characterise the *makuṭa* of later bronzes. The features of the face bear close resemblance to those of previous bronzes.

As regards the *kaṇṭhī*, for the first time we meet with here a variety with *kiṅkiṇis* attached to its bottom, which is only a natural development over the cluster of necklaces found on such bronzes as the Vishṇu (Fig. 30) and the Vishāpaharaṇa. Later on this *kaṇṭhī* becomes a special feature of Vishṇu images.

The modelling of the torso is in the same style as that of the Kirātamūrti. The shoulders however, are rounded off and drooping. Arms are rather short; yet the early characteristic of rounding off of the angles at the elbows is preserved here. The fingers are tender and graceful.

Though the *simha-mukha* is absent yet the details pertaining to it are clearly seen on the clasp of the waist-band which is in two courses. The *uttarīya* in two bands is interesting. The loop of the lower band has now assumed a narrow shape with a contracted bottom, which in later bronzes loosely hangs down between legs. The treatment of the loin-cloth too is interesting, because its workmanship is not the same on both sides. In view of the fact that this portion of the figure was against the *prabhā* of the Kirātamūrti less attention was paid to it. But the workmanship of the front side of the loin-cloth is apparently the same, and it will be clearly seen if its sashes, bows and the flowing ends are imagined to be absent from the waist.

The same heaviness as is found in the legs of Kirātamūrti marks the legs of this figure also and more than this in both bronzes the *bhaṅga* of the left leg has the same grace and beauty and the rhythm of its flowing line is superb.

The tilted head, the *añjali* pose, the posture of the legs and above all the calm expression of the face at once suggest the poignance of the situation namely the discovery by Arjuna of the Lord and his instantaneous submission to Him and repentance for his foolish action.

The *śiraś-cakra* at the back is definitely in the style of the same detail of the Vishāpaharaṇa but with a slight improvement over that. Though the ringlets of hair suggest a deviation from those of the Kirātamūrti, yet their style has its prototypes in the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 32) and Umā (Fig. 36) of this period and in the Vishṇu (Fig. 30) of the earlier period. But the absence of the pendent ornament is rather significant and requires an explanation which is very difficult to give. Fig. 47

The quivers of this bronze, a feature rarely met with in bronzes, are obviously archaic in style compared to the quivers of the Trivikrama (Fig. 53). The lines of the loin-cloth remind one of those of the Maitreya. The broad blade-like thing jutting out

of the middle of the waist is interesting and is clearly akin to that of Somāskanda (Fig. 36). As usual the other features such as the cross-band, *udara-bandha*, arm-band, anklets and the bows of the *uttarīya* are clearly seen here.

Thus the details of this figure show their affinity to those of the Kirātamūrti or of the earlier figures. Some of them, for instance, the *kirīṭa*, *kaṇṭhī* and the loop of the sash are all clearly precursors of those found in bronzes of the immediately succeeding period. No doubt, there are some differences in detail between this figure and the Kirātamūrti. But it is not uncommon that such differences in detail including the difference in treatment of locks of hair and the loin-cloth, exist between figures of a single group as *e.g.*, between Śiva and Umā of the Somāskanda (Fig. 36). It is not only found between male and female figures but also between figures of the same sex as for instance the Śiva and Vishṇu of the Kalyāṇasundara group from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Figs. 126–27) and the Śri and Bhū of Vishṇu[1] No. 1 of the *Catalogue* (Figs. 123–24). So, we believe that this is undoubtedly one of the two original figures that stood flanking the Kirātamūrti. Professor Nayar's misgivings in this regard including the one that although at the time when the image of Arjuna was dug out it was found fixed on the left of Kirātamūrti it cannot have been the same as was there originally, may be given up. Similarly his statement relating to the date of the figure, that "it cannot be removed from them (*i.e.*, Gandharvas in the Gaṅgādhara panel from Tiruchirappalli) very much in point of time", may now be seen to be without basis. Similarly Mr. T. N. Ramachandran's statement on the date of this image that "it has to be placed in the Coḷa age somewhere about 1100 A.D. by virtue of the stylised decorative features . . .",[2] may have to be modified.

Fig. 48 The bronze Naṭeśa[3] belonging to the Bank of Italy, Rome, displays features, a great majority of which are commonly met with in bronzes of this period. But as will be shown below, along with a few others *e.g.*, Naṭeśa (Fig. 34) and Trivikrama (Fig. 53) this is also an example of a distinctive school which specialised in modelling figures of slender frame and splendid workmanship.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* has a beautiful conical form topped by a flower as in the case of figures of Śiva dealt with above. The crescent moon, now large in size, is on proper right near the top and a *Dātura* flower seems to be on the left side. The pronged ornament enclosing a big skull is prominently seen in front. There is the deep *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear and the right ear is without any ornament. The face is somewhat round, the forehead is broad showing the third eye, the eyes, nose and lips are bold but smooth. The expression suggests self-absorption and there is no indication of

[1] Pl. I of *Catalogue*.

[2] *The Kirātārjunīyam or Arjuna's Penance in Indian Art*, p. 92.

[3] *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, Vol. I, Pl. 14, Fig. 7.

smile. The neck is high, and there are three necklaces. The central necklace is of *Rudrāksha* berries. The lower one has three pendants of which the middle one seems to be an animal tooth. The *yajñopavīta* is of three strands of which the central one is flat and ribbon-like, and the lower one which is stiff falls down at an inclination. The *udara-bandha* is also ribbon-like and it has not yet developed the flowing ends.

The torso, like that of Somāskanda (Fig. 36), has become broad above and narrow below. Consequently the chest has become wide, but the shoulders are not high but slightly drooping. The joint at the shoulders is obviously more slender than in the previous examples. The four hands are slim and are decorated with *nāga-valayas* on the arms and with a set of three bangles on the wrists. The upper right hand holds the *ḍamaru* between the thumb and the middle finger as the Kūram Naṭeśa does. At the elbow of this arm is wound round a realistically done serpent with its raised hood shown facing the beholder. In the later images of Naṭeśa it is usually would round the lower right forearm. The deviation seen here and in the Kūram Naṭeśa where the serpent is held in the upper left arm seems to point to the fact that as yet this feature had not become standardised. The lower right arm is in *āhūya-varada* pose as suggested by the two remaining fingers, the other two fingers being broken and missing. The lower left arm is broken below the elbow but its *gaja-hasta* posture is clear. Its position is however not the same as is seen in the case of the Kūram Naṭeśa, but is slightly raised. Even the manner of bending the arm at the shoulder is changed and it is akin to that of the Nallūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 51) to be discussed below. The upper right hand holds the *agni* kept in a small cup, a detail which is also found repeated in the Naṭeśas from Nallūr and from Okkūr (Fig. 88) which are probably not for removed in time from this. The loin-cloth is tight-fitting and seems to be plain although in the period to which this may be assigned the practice of treating the garment with folds of wave-upon-wave pattern seems to have been in vogue as is evidenced by the Kirātamūrti and Arjuna detailed above. But the plain loin-cloth of the Okkūr Naṭeśa which is definitely later than this, clearly indicates that at least in some of the bronzes this sort of treatment of the garment was continued for a long time. The loin-cloth is wrapped high up in the abdomen. The waist-band shows only a simple knot in front with on equally simple bow spreading horizontally on either side. The *uttarīya* is tied round the waist in two courses; and the bands are perhaps decorated. A very interesting detail that is found here for the first time is the three short vertical ends of cloth (?) connecting the upper and lower bands of the sash. There are no bows and hanging ends on the sides. There is a *pādasara* with *kiṅkiṇīs* attached to it on each ankle.

Like the arms, the legs are also slim and treated in an extremely pliable form. To our knowledge, so far no other example of bronze possessing this particular feature

has been met with. Hence this specimen may have to be considered either as a unique one or as one of doubtful authenticity. In view of the fact that a majority of other details mentioned above seem to be genuine, the former view may be taken as a more probable one. Both the legs are bent deeply at the knee but it is more in the right leg than in the left, with the result that the right heel is lifted up high, the toes alone touching the pedestal. The enclosed space has thus assumed a beautiful square. This mode of dance is called the *catura-tāṇḍava*.[1]

The figure of Apasmāra Purusha here is also small and is shown lying with face towards the spectator. He holds a serpent in his left hand. The face is chubby. The *padmāsana* is absent from this figure but the right toes seem to be supported by a miniature double-lotus rest. The *bhadrāsana* is somewhat cubical with the indentation emphasised a little more here than in other *āsanas* discussed so far. A bit of a projection on the proper right side of the *āsana* suggests that there were spikes in the pedestal to receive a *prabhā*.

As the back view of this beautiful figure is not available, nothing can be said of the details there which, as has been shown above, are in the nature of providing very valuable clues bearing on the dating of a bronze in support of the date arrived at after the examination of the details of its front side. This handicap notwithstanding, the above discussion helps us to assign this bronze to about 900 A.D.

That this is a unique specimen from the point of view of its artistic qualities has already been mentioned. The mode of dance represented here adds weight to that statement. By now it would have been clear that among the specimens of bronzes examined above this is the one in which the treatment of movement has been carried to the maximum, the same feature even in the Kūram Naṭeśa being less forceful than here. While dealing with this special aspect, the *sthapati* had obviously judiciously avoided all violent movement and had kept the mode of dance within extremely studied and restrained limits. All the charm and refinement of the bronze is due to this feature which has made it one of the masterpieces of this period. Moreover, the disposition of the hands and legs being clearly akin to that of the Naṭeśa from Bādāmi and Ellora, it is apparent that in this the ancient traditions of art are continued. Although the mode represented by the Naṭeśas from Nallūr and Tiruvaraṅguḷam is the same yet the manner of holding up of one of the legs in the air in them may be said to suggest a comparatively advanced stage of the portrayal of the theme. This is another proof for the early date of this bronze.

[1] *Cf.* Naṭeśas in this mode of dance from Bādāmi, Tiruvaraṅguḷam and Nallūr, in T.A. Gopinatha Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, Pl. LXVI and LXVII. However, it is the left leg that is raised in these examples.

To about the same period may be assigned the small Avalokiteśvara in the Boston Museum illustrated by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy on Pl. XL, in the *Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Parts I and II. His description of the figure as given in his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, against Pl. XCIX, Fig. 297 is as follows.

"Avalokiteśvara, seated, teaching, the right hand in *vyākhyāna-mudrā*. Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha in the headdress. Bronze, height 3½". Eighth century."

The figure is seated in the *lalitāsana* on a high *bhadrāsana* of which the indentation is broad. As this Avalokiteśvara is sparsely decorated, it is a bit difficult to compare it with any of the figures discussed above. But the style of the *āsana*, the modelling and the treatment of other features especially of the gesture of the right hand are found to be more or less akin to those of the above Naṭeśa. Hence its nearness to it in time, in spite of its small size. The eighth century date assigned to it by Dr. Coomaraswamy seems to us to be too early.

The Simhanāda or Lokeśvara from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam[1] may be said to go with the above figure. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran describes it on p. 53 of his book on the Nāgapaṭṭiṇam bronzes. We may add the following to his description. Fig. 49

There is the prominent flower design on top of the *makuṭa*, which is characteristic of the *jaṭā-makuṭas* of this period. The treatment of it apparently tends to be conventional. Curiously no fillet is present round the head. The general features are somewhat less clear. Yet the contemplative expression is apparent. Though the *yajñopavīta* is simple, that it flows is suggested by the waves seen at short intervals. The treatment of the nipple and the navel is obviously characteristic of the art of sculpture of this period. The garment is plain in which respect it is akin to that of the above Naṭeśa. But the lines of the upper edge of it visible at the waist, and the folds seen below the knee of the right leg, are features slightly more advanced. Though no *simha-mukha* is seen on the clasp of the waist-band yet the pattern consisting of horizontal lines cutting vertical ones is clearly an improvisation the significance of which is not clear. The bows on either side of this pattern too show lines on them. More interesting than these are the three flowing ends of the waist-band shown on the broken pedestal in front of the left foot, which apparently belong to the class of similar ones seen in the above Naṭeśa. The *pādasaras* too are pronounced. Probably the *āsana* was a hollow *bhadrāsana* which is broken.

The back view shows the hair hanging in elegant by twisted curls and the *yajñopavīta* with its knot on the left shoulder is clearly shown here. The beauty of modelling and the naturalness of the posture are clearly seen in this view. Fig. 50

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, Pl. IX (1).

Besides the above characteristics, the drooping shoulders, slender limbs, the deep curve of the line of the right side, the somewhat angular finish of the elbows and the delicate modelling in general, make its affinity to the above Naṭeśa certain. In spite of its small size, it is, like the above Avalokiteśvara, a specimen of a very high order of workmanship.

Fig 51 The Naṭeśa form Nallūr[1] seems to belong to a slightly later date. It is one of the very interesting examples of Naṭeśas. So, it has been reproduced several times.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is very high and executed in bold relief. It is attached to the top of the *prabhā*. The flower on top is of beautiful workmanship. The crescent moon is tucked on the right side near the top. The *Dātura* flower, on the left side is in high relief. The *keyūra*-like ornament with prongs attached to it and enclosing the skull is also seen. Ends of *jaṭās* are probably slightly jerking out on either side. There is the usual broad fillet. The face is definitely elongated and shows more prominently the eyes, the nose, the lips and the ears than the Naṭeśa from Italy (Fig. 48). The right ear is bare while a broad but not deep *patra-kuṇḍala* adorns the left ear. The expression on the face suggests supreme satisfaction.

The neck is high. There are a broad necklet and a long necklace of *Rudrāksha* berries, with a pendant. The *yajñopavīta* is, as usual, in three strands. The *udara-bandha* is prominent.

The treatment of the torso, as also of other parts, is remarkably vigorous in spite of its attenuated form. Of all the bronzes examined so far, this possesses the greatest flexion, which is clearly observable from the back side. Folds of the abdomen are gracefully delineated.

The shoulders are drooping. Due to tilting of the head to the right, the right shoulder has gone down while the left one has gone up. A group of graceful locks of hair adorned with flowers is seen on either shoulder. For the first time we see here a chain-like thing falling from the shoulder to the armpit. It may be mentioned here, that this feature is, from now on, repeated in the bronzes of the subsequent periods where it becomes bolder gradually.

There are four arms on each side. They are arranged in a beautiful manner avoiding as much as possible the clumsiness that would otherwise result on account of the larger number. That the *sthapati* took particular care in regard to this feature is borne out also by the various gestures of the arms, depicted effectively and in a charming manner. There are *nāga-valayas* on the arms and a set of three *valayas* on each wrist of which the middle one is thicker than the other two.

[1] T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, Pl. LXVII.

The drum is held in the upper right hand, as usual between the thumb and the middle finger; but it is held with its faces, one below the other. It is not known what is held in the second hand which is attached to the *prabhā*. A cane-like thing, probably the handle of the trident, is seen in the third hand. The lowest hand is in *abhaya* pose. The upper left hand holds a cup of fire. The manner of holding it is noteworthy. The second hand which is attached to the *prabhā* holds a bunch of foliage. The third hand holds a three-hooded serpent. The last arm is held in the *gaja-hasta* pose. The treatment of this arm may be seen to be distinctly in advance over that of the Naṭeśa belonging to the Bank of Italy. And the variety of ways in which the arms are shown engaged and consequently moving, is admirable. Further the delicacy of treatment of the fingers appears to be a special feature of this bronze.

The loin-cloth consists only of a pair of tight-fitting drawers. There are the courses of the waist-band with the *simha-mukha* (?) clasp on it, which has an elongated bow on either side. The elongation of every limb and appendage of this bronze adds to the slenderness and elongate character of the whole figure. It may be mentioned in passing that the Indian *sthapatis* seem to have had an eye always on the propriety of each individual item of the details to the total effect produced by the entire figure. The *uttarīya* shows two bands of which only one is broad and its loop in front is, however, small. It is interesting to note that the bands and the short ends seen on either side have also been extended but more interesting than this is the manner in which the flowing ends are shown. They are made to fly about in a symmetrical way suggesting, by the way, the rhythmic movement of the hand while dancing. Their ends are attached to the *prabhā* on either side. It must be mentioned here that only here we see for the first time the suggestion of the flowing ends of cloth in a Naṭeśa figure; for in most of the later sculptures representing this deity, this has become a special characteristic but there it is not the ends of the *uttarīya* that flutter about but the ends of the cloth used as the *udara-bandha*. When this became the rule, a convention seems to have been established by which both the ends of the *udara-bandha* cloth came to be shown on the left side only, unlike the present instance where on each side is seen an end fluttering about. This particular feature alone suggests an early stage, probably the beginning stage itself, of this detail, the next stage when it has tended to become somewhat conventional being exemplified by the Okkūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 88) to be discussed below.

The legs are also modelled in a gracefully rounded manner; but here the angularities have become more pronounced. Nevertheless, they have not on that account become stiff and less forceful. On the contrary all the power and stamina for which the figure seems to be distinguished are apparently accentuated by the very suggestion of angularities.

There are *pādasaras* on the feet. The right leg is planted on the head of Apasmāra Purusha, who is here seated instead of reclining. The left leg is lifted up here, but not yet fully. It appears that this stage is next to that found in the Naṭeśa from Italy (Fig. 48). Here also the space between the legs has assumed a beautiful square shape and the mode of dance is therefore *catura*. The treatment and disposition of the legs coupled with the *bhaṅga* of the upper portion add grace to the beautiful pose, which makes it a splendid Naṭeśa. The Apasmāra Purusha has a chubby face and pot-belly and wears a *jatā-bhāra*. He wears a broad *kaṇṭhī* with a pendant hanging from it. *Udara-bandha*, armlets and *valayas* are also seen. From the picture it is not clear what he holds in his hands. The features are fine and the expression is not pathetic as in other cases, but is one of complete reconciliation.

Fig. 52 The details of the back side of Naṭeśa are also very clear, the twisted strands of hair swinging about and the headdress being specially noteworthy. The stage of their development aids considerably in fixing its position in the chronological sequence of the bronzes.

The headdress shows distinctly the manner of *bandhas* or tying of the *jaṭās*. There is a big knob-like thing here. *Śiraś-cakra* is akin to that of the Naṭeśa from Kūram (Fig. 34) but it has a cup-like shape. The usual tassel hangs from its central knob. This decoration is attached to the back of the neck instead of at a place slightly above it. The twisted locks of hair falling gracefully on the back are done in a manner that defeats camparison. For, they are probably only ten in number of which two seem to be depicted on each shoulder. The remaining six locks are shown three on each side, the space in between these two sets of locks being filled in by the usual pendant. There is wide space between two locks of hair which has been taken advantage of by the *sthapati*. He necessarily restricted the number of these locks in order to display them as curving slightly on this side, a treatment which admirably suggests the rhythmic movement of the figure while dancing. Thus more than any other detail, these locks of hair have assumed a special importance.

The blade-like projecting end of the cloth seen in the middle of the waist is obviously akin to that of Arjuna (Fig. 46) from Tiruveṭkaḷam. Here, on this side it is that we see clearly the bows and flowing ends.

Besides, the modelling of the torso shows the deep bend on the right side and a wide space separating the hands from the side. The manner of attaching the arms to one shoulder differs from that of the other. On the right side the uppermost hand is distinctly separate from the rest of which two are joined in an addorsed manner. In the case of left side three arms are attached, one below the other, and this has necessitated a slight distortion of the line of the upper arm and an exaggeration of the length of the shoulder.

The part below the waist does not suffer from any defect, and we can appreciate fully from this side the exquisite modelling of this position. The details of the Apasmāra Purusha such as the spread-out hair, the prominent armlet, the waist-band and the blade-like projection at the waist are also clearly seen in this side.

Now let us examine the *āsana* and the *prabhāvaḷi*. This is the second instance where a *prabhā* is found intact. Like its predecessor this *prabhā* is also attached by its two sides to a rectangular stand which is not a mere plate as it is in the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44) but a moulded one. But as in the case of the latter, this stand is placed into the socket of a larger stand which may be taken to be an example of *bhadrāsana* in spite of the absence of some details usually associated with a *bhadrāsana*. So it is clear that the practice as seen in the Kirātamūrti, of making the *bhadrāsana* separately was in vogue during this period. The form of the *prabhā* may be seen to be a step more advanced than that of the Kirātamūrti. Here the part of the *prabhā* above the left knee is semi-circular and that below it is vertical. At the places where the props widen are attached on the inner side of the *prabhā* the ends of the fluttering cloth ; and it is noteworthy that on the outer side of the *prabhā* at these places no flame of fire is shown probably with a view to avoid the distraction that might have resulted by crowding here more details than it can artistically accommodate. If this was the intention of the maker of this figure, it is commendable in cases where it is successfully experimented. In this instance, however, this experiment has resulted in creating a greater hiatus between the two flames shown at these points than the space between any other pair of flames, which has spoiled to some extent the beauty of the series of flames placed at regular intervals. This disturbance appears to be greater than it actually is on account of the fact that it occurs at just the place about the middle of the props where it ought to have been avoided. The number of flames is definitely more here than in the *prabhā* of the Kirātamūrti, and they are twenty including the top-most flame which is not so beautiful as in the Kirātamūrti, although it retains some of its features. The flames are not distinct and so the number of tongues in each of them cannot be stated, but each flame seems to possess only three tongues.

Thus in every respect this bronze is distinctly more developed than the Naṭeśa discussed above. But in so far as the general treatment goes, there are many points of agreement between the two. It is therefore not unlikely that they are products of the same school, although the provenance of the previous figure is not known. On this basis this Naṭeśa may be assigned to about the beginning of the 10th century A. D.[1]

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1 Mr. Karl Khandalavala's date for this image namely late 8th century or early 9th century A. D., is too early. (*Vide* his article in *Mārg*, Vol, IV, No. 4, p. 19).

It is not known when exactly the various schools of sculpture of this Pallava–Choḷa
Fig. 53 transition period came to a close. The magnificent Trivikrama from Siṅgānallūr near Coimbatore may be said to be one of the examples of the art as obtained during the last phase of this period. That it comes from this part of South India called Koṅgunāḍu ruled over by chieftains who were semi-independent may tempt one to say that this bronze was a product of a distinctive school of sculpture that flourished in this region. But the style of this bronze is unmistakably akin to that of a number of bronzes, of more or less the same date, hailing from the Tanjore District; and no other specimen of this type has so far been reported from this region. On these grounds we may say that this bronze was either made in the studio of a *sthapati* under the employ of a Choḷa monarch of Tanjore and transported here or was made by a local man who had intimate knowledge of the traditions of the art as obtained in the Tanjore District at that time. Whatever may be its authorship that it is a great masterpiece of bronze is evident from its workmanship.

It is about 60 *cm* high and stands with the right leg planted on a *padmāsana* over a *bhadrāsana* which has a pair of spikes intended to receive the *prabhā*. This pedestal seems, however, to be a substitute for the original which is missing. This is evident not only from the highly developed style in which the petals of the *padma* are worked but also from the fact that the space between the two spikes is so small that no *prabhā* of the type of the period with which we are familiar, intended to enclose the figure of which the limbs extend far on either side, can be fitted into them. We have therefore nothing more to say about the pedestal. However, it is rather unfortunate that the original pedestal has not survived which would have helped, in its own way, in deciding the chronological position of this bronze. Its description is as follows:—

A high *kirīṭa* slightly broader at the base than at the top is found on the head. There is a knob surmounting it, which is prominent. The decoration of the *kirīṭa* is elaborate and it includes also the item namely the ornament with prongs. The entire head of the figure being worn out much, the details of the *kirīṭa*, too, have been rubbed off. There is the characteristic broad fillet round the head. The face is exquisitely modelled and its chubbiness makes it rounded rather than elongate. The details of the eyes have been much rubbed off, but the sensitiveness of the modelling of the nose and the lips is apparent. There are *makara-kuṇḍalas* in the ears.

The neck is rather short. The inclination of the head to the proper right has made the left side of the neck more visible than the right side. Interestingly there are here two pendent *kaṇṭhīs* with their middle parts studded with gems. This feature is rather novel because in Vishṇu figures broad close-fitting *kaṇṭhīs* are more commonly met with than pendent ones. The *vastra-yajñopavīta* has three strands. It bears a beautiful knot

with ends gracefully hanging down on the left side of the chest. The longer strand is shown falling down vertically which may be compared with the similar treatment of *yajñopavīta* of figures of Vishṇu (Figs. 15, 17 etc.). Obviously it goes beneath the lower garment as suggested by the line on it. But a very interesting feature of the flat and thin central strand of the *yajñopavīta* is that it is thrown over the fore-arm of the lowermost arm, just as in the case of Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38). Hence it is worth while recalling what has been stated in the discussion about this detail under the Vishāpharaṇa. This feature which, at first, suggests an affinity to a similar feature of a few sculptures belonging to the early Pallava period, cannot on that account alone be taken to suggest that all figures with this feature belong to that period. Its treatment in the various sculptures and the context where it occurs should also be taken into consideration in arriving at the date of the figure. In this instance, though the *yajñopavīta* goes over the arm, yet its treatment is extremely refined and creates an illusion that it is made of an actual textile ribbon. The context in which it occurs is full of details which are only remotely connected with similar ones of sculptures of the Pallava period. It may be mentioned in this connection, that the bows, flowing ends and loop of the *uttarīya* too are treated in a like manner. The *udara-bandha* is broad, and bears some decorative designs on it. Besides these, there is here the additional detail of *channavīra* (cross-band) intended to hold the other interesting detail namely the quivers seen behind the shoulders.

Now to the treatment of the torso. That it is almost cylindrical in shape is clear. But unlike the torso of the Somāskanda from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 36) the torso of this figure displays a classical refinement in modelling. The lines of the sides and other planes of this part of the body are not only pure and beautiful but also fine and mellifluous. These qualities are enhanced by the chest which is here somewhat broad. The shoulders of this bronze, like those of the bronzes dealt with just before, are not high but they are slightly drooping. There seems to be a small mole-like thing on the right chest representing *śrī-vatsa*. The pendent ornament on the right shoulder is somewhat broad and may be therefore said to be more developed than the one met with for the first time in the Naṭeśa from Nallūr.

Like this Naṭeśa, this figure too is eight-armed. All the characteristics of treatment of this special detail mentioned in connection with the Nallūr Naṭeśa are applicable with equal force to this figure also. Here, however, the rendering of this feature is obviously more elegant than in the Naṭeśa. The skill with which the arms are spread out on either side without affecting in the least the beauty of the central figure is consummate and exemplary. In fact the figure seems not to suffer from the additional arms at all, they producing the effect of so many additional embellishments calculated to enhance the

glory of the work. These qualities of the figure are the results of the familiarity that the *sthapati* of this bronze had with such inventions of special art forms as that of the Nallūr Naṭeśa.

On the arms are the *keyūras* with the projecting prongs the form of which has by now been perfected; and here they are particularly well marked, the bands at their bottom being pronounced. That the *keyūra* is tied by means of thread is seen from the upper looped knot on each arm. Below this band of the *keyūra* is seen, on each arm, another band which is also tied behind as the above, which shows in front a projecting ornament (?). In all probability it is the *vāji-bandha*, seen prominently in several bronzes such as the Naṭeśa from Tiruvaraṅguḷam (Fig. 107) and the Kalyāṇasundara from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 126) to be discussed below. If it is so then this is probably one of the earliest, if not *the* earliest, bronzes where this ornament is met with for the first time. Three *valayas* adorn each of the wrists.

The uppermost arm is engaged in taking out a *śara* (arrow) from the quiver. The arm below it holds a handle-like thing, probably the handle of a *khaḍga* (sword) the blade of which is missing. The third hand holds a small disc by its handle probably the top of the *gadā*. In the last hand is seen a beautiful little wheel, the *Sudarśana-cakra* which is very simple and realistic in workmanship. The uppermost hand on the left side is also shown as if trying to take out a *śara* from the other quiver, but the stage of removing the arrow from the quiver is not reached yet. The arm below it is held up and shows its hand in *kaṭaka-mudrā* the entire pose suggesting undoubtedly that it is intended to hold the bow, the *Śārṅga*. The third hand holds a broad circular shield. Between these two arms is shown the uplifted left leg. The last arm which is here actually seen between first two arms is powerfully thrust up with the hand showing the *sūcī-mudrā*.

It is hardly necessary to repeat the fact that the problem of composing the multiple arms, each engaged in a particular activity has been tackled in a bold and confident manner here by the *sthapati* and the resultant achievement is grand. The rendering of the gestures of the various hands adds a singular charm to the grandeur of the composition.

The special lower garment of the Lord namely the *pītāmbara* reaches well below the knees. In the treatment of this detail also we see the imprints of a master-hand. The *taraṅga* form of the folds is executed in a unique manner. There was a great problem here for the *sthapati* namely the garment had to be shown covering both the legs of which one of them was lifted up. This required the filling up of a large space between the two legs by the cloth. This was indeed a formidable problem but it has

been tackled by him admirably well by showing the garment fan-wise between the legs. At the same time, conforming to the then existing practice of showing the folds in the wave-over-wave pattern, the *sthapati* had also introduced the waves into the scheme. The folds may be said to be more pronounced here than in any other bronze examined so far. The folds are depicted in two sets each going in a direction opposite to the other. Between the sets of waves there existed some space. It has also been dealt with in an artistic way, by showing the two ends of the sash of the waist here. That these are similar to the ends of sash met with in the Somāskanda and Vishāpaharaṇa bronzes discussed above is clear; but here the manner of their depiction and their form are distinctly more evolved. It is noteworthy that instead of showing them hanging down straight, the imaginative *sthapati* has shown them bent at the tips pointing upwards. The waist-band goes twice round the waist and there is the usual clasp in front with a small bow on either side. Whether there is any *simha-mukha* on it is rather difficult to say. The *uttarīya* is also wound round twice. It may be mentioned here that this is the broadest type of *uttarīya* that we have come across so far. Its front loop is broad and hangs low, and the bends seen in it are due to the lifting up of the left leg. Though the bends are introduced out of necessity, they have been used effectively to enhance the beauty of the wave pattern in which the entire lower part has been conceived and executed. As mentioned above the sashes too are very thin and this is particularly seen in the bows and the hanging ends seen on either side. The latter are seen jutting out, that on the left being shown beyond the lower garment just in line with the middle of the left thigh. It is also pointing up. These, together with the upward looking ends of the sash falling between the sets of waves of the *pītāmbara*, are intended to show the movement of the figure; and the mild sway of these hanging ends of the *uttarīya* are quite in keeping with the restrained treatment of the whole figure.

Apart from these decorative details the treatment of the legs themselves is very interesting. The right leg is planted on the *āsana* while the left leg is thrown up into the sky. This unnatural posture necessarily involves the bending of the thigh at the hip-joint. But here the sculptor has apparently risen equal to the occasion, as he has done uniformly in this figure, and has rendered this feature, without any distortion, in a splendid manner. Equally beautiful is the treatment of the left leg which is smoothly tapering towards the foot. The slight curve of the foot is obviously in the nature of relieving the monotony of the straight leg. That the sculptor was an adept in depicting the limbs thus, is exemplified by the lower-most left arm.

In the proportions of the leg a slight defect seems to have crept in. For, the right leg, for all intents and purposes, seems shorter than the left one. And it is the latter that has the quality of fitting into the proportions of the part above the waist. It must

be noted that this leg is made to appear longer by its pointed foot of which the lines unlike those of the right leg, are continuous with the lines of the leg itself. The concentration bestowed on this leg as suggested by this exaggeration is necessitated by the theme where the most important action namely the Lord's measuring of the upper regions of the universe by his left foot is involved. Not being content with emphasising this fact by this manner of showing the left leg, the *sthapati* seems to have used the lower left arm also so as to draw the attention of the devotee specially to this aspect of the theme. This is one of the possible reasons for showing that arm in such a significant *sūcī* pose which apparently seems to continue heaven-ward the line of the left foot which seems to extend imperceptibly to join the line of the plam of that hand. This slight defect in the proportions of the legs notwithstanding, the achievement of the *sthapati* in representing this difficult theme is tremendous. This noteworthy feature of the bronze becomes clear when it is compared with the magnificent Trivikrama sculptures from Bādāmi[1] and Mahābalipuram.[2] No doubt these latter ones are conceived on a monumental scale and are carved on walls of rock, not easy to manipulate. But considering the qualities of other sculptures occurring along with these panels, their workmanship is comparatively inferior and it suggests that the sculptors who represented this theme obviously found it difficult to cope with it adequately. The greatest difficulty that they seem to have experienced was in regard to the depiction of the lifted-up leg. That they did not succeed in rendering this feature effectively and beautifully is obvious from the rather clumsy manner in which this leg is shown in these reliefs. Not only did the sculptors of the 6th and 7th centuries find the theme taxing them to the utmost, but the sculptors of the 12th and 17th centuries A. D. had also experienced the same difficulty, as evidenced by the Trivikramas from Mysore[3] and Kumbhakoṇam belonging to the respective periods. It may be mentioned in passing that the difficulty in representing the theme without defects, seems to have been felt by *sthapatis* of other parts of India as well, as is seen in the Trivikramas from Rājim, Raipur and from Joṛādeul, Dacca (Dacca Museum).[4] But the bronze under discussion being almost a perfect representation of the theme shows that its *sthapati* had accomplished successfully what proved to be an impossibility to others of his ilk of all periods. On the basis of the agreement in styles between this piece and the bronzes discussed prior to this, this bronze may be assigned to about the beginning of the 10th century A. D.

The foregoing study gives us a fair idea about the progress of the art during the period between the middle of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th centuries A.D.,

[1] R. D. Banerji, *Bas-reliefs of Bādāmi* (M.A.S.I. No. 25), Pls. IX a, and XVI a.
[2] A. H. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, Vol. II. Pl. XXI (b).
[3] T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Pl. LII (3).
[4] C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical and Chronological Factors in Indian Iconography*, Pl. XIII, Figs. B and D.

which we have called the Pallava-Choḷa transition period. Of the bronzes discussed above, a great majority belong to the Tanjore District. Unlike in the case of the previous period, this period is represented by bronzes not only from this District, but also from Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam and Koṅgunāḍu. It clearly shows the wide-spread popularity of the art. As has been said above, this was mainly due to the growth of temple rituals and the increasing popularity of festivals of which taking out in procession, decorated metal images of gods and goddesses, for the benefit of all the people was an important aspect.

Secondly most of the bronzes dealt with here are cast solid, which shows not only the great advancement made in the technique of making bronzes but also the prosperous conditions of economic life of the people which made possible the use of vast quantities of metals like copper and tin for making such large solid images, during the period. It may be remembered that the bronzes discussed above are comparatively larger than those of the previous periods.

Thirdly while a majority of the bronzes belonging to the previous period were Vaishṇavite in character, those of the period under discussion are mostly Śaivite. As we have stated above, this was due to the impetus given to the growth of Śaivism by kings as well as to the noble efforts of saints and teachers of Śaivism like Sundaramūrti, Cheramān-perumāḷ and Śaṅkarāchārya.

Among these bronzes, are found representations for the first time of Somāskanda and Naṭeśa, Tripurāntaka and Kirātamūrti. While very little conceptual variation is noticed in the bronzes representing the other aspects of Śiva, in the case of Naṭeśa, the *sthapatis* of this period seemed to have zealously experimented with the theme with a view to arrive at a form that would remain the cynosure of attraction amongst the specimens of this art. Though the results of this noble endeavour of the *sthapatis* were by no means small, yet their objective seems to have still eluded them. Nevertheless their experimentation and its results paved the way for the realisation of the objective by their posterity. Like the Śaivites, the Vaishṇavites and the followers of other religions like Buddhism, also required bronzes representing their gods and goddesses to satisfy the growing demand of their temple rituals. Hence the existence of bronzes such as Trivikrama, Avalokiteśvara and Siṁhanadā-Lokeśvarā. The number of deities and the varieties of forms in which each of them was conceived and the number of interesting poses and gestures in which it was depicted, seem to have increased gradually. In view of the fact that this was the period when new experiments were made in every one of the fields mentioned above, all the resultant products breathed an air of freshness and shone with a rare brilliance. It may be said that these qualities disappeared from bronzes belonging to subsequent periods. So, every one of the

bronzes produced during this period, may be said to be a masterpiece, and there are also quite a few like the Vīṇādhara, Somāskanda, Kirātamūrti, Avalokiteśvara and Trivikrama which are almost unique in character not only from the point of the great themes represented by them, but also from the point of view of art, pure and simple. Though it is unfortunate that nothing is known about the makers of each of them, yet their finished works bear eloquent testimony to the mastery of the *sthapatis* in their profession born out of discipline, devotion and intelligent application of the various formulas of the art.

EARLY PĀṆḌYA BRONZE

Before proceeding to examine the bronzes of the subsequent period in the history of South India, which was dominated by the Choḷas, it has become necessary to advert briefly to the contributions made to the growth of the art by the people of the Pāṇḍyan country. Specimens of bronzes that have been obtained from places in this region are few and most of them belong to periods later than 1200 A.D. Recently the Naṭeśa
Fig. 54 to be discussed presently was obtained from the insignificant village of Poruppū-mettuppaṭṭi in the Tirumaṅgalam Taluk of the Madurai District. As it is obviously in the style which is almost akin to that of the bronzes discussed above, and shows differences only in certain details, we are compelled to think that it was produced in a school of sculpture that existed in the Pāṇḍyan territory at that time. The size and workmanship of the bronze are such that it should have been made on the orders of an important person, possibly a king of the Pāṇḍyan dynasty of the period.

That the latter alternative is a more probable one seems to get support from this, namely that this Naṭeśa, unlike the Naṭeśas in the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* pose commonly met with in the Choḷa country is in the pose called *kālmāṟi-āḍiya-tāṇḍava* in Tamil, which means "dancing with the leg reversed." Though the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form was popular all over South India, there are some special forms of Naṭeśa associated with certain specific places here. For instance the *ūrddhva-tāṇḍava* or *lalāṭa-tilaka-karaṇa* is special to Tiruvālaṅgāḍu in the Chittoor District. Similarly *kālmāṟi-āḍiya-tāṇḍava* is associated with Madurai. That this form was assumed by the Lord due to special prayers of a king of the Pāṇḍyan dynasty gives all the significance to the bronze in question that it should have been made to order of one of the kings of this dynasty. It is also possible that the people of this region, being proud of the event that happened in the reign of an early king of their country, themselves arranged to perpetuate this memorable event by making Naṭeśas of this form only, for purposes of worship and festival in the temples of their country. Today in the famous Mīnākshī temple at Madurai, two Naṭeśas are found, one in the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form and the other in the *kālmāṟi-āḍiya-tāṇḍava* form. The existence of the former seems to be due to the

imposition of the preferences of religious themes of the Cholas. On the other hand the latter image which is based on the theme specially dear to the people of this region is there by virtue of the requirements of the rituals of the temple, which have been existing for ages, long before the incursions of the Cholas into this region. When the bronze has features of sculptures datable to the beginning of the 10th century A.D., it is obvious that it should have been made during the reign of the powerful Pāṇḍyan ruler of that period. If this is accepted then it may be taken that the school of art which produced this was actively fostered by this king.

It is known that Āditya I Choḷa, was an ally of Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa and assisted him in the famous battle of Śrī Purambiyam.[1] In view of the fact that the style of the bronze is akin to that of the bronzes dealt with above, it may not belong to his time. After the death of Varaguṇa, political troubles started at Madurai. But some time later, as soon as he became king, Parāntaka I Choḷa is said to have invaded the Pāṇḍya country and defeated its king. "The Sinnamanūr and the Udayendiram plates concur in the name of the Pāṇḍya king, Rājasiṁha."[2] The exact date of subjugation of Rājasiṁha by Parāntaka is not known, but it is said to have happened somewhere in the second decade of the 10th century A.D. It is therefore likely that before that date, King Rājasiṁha was ruling rather peacefully. As the datails of this bronze point to about this time, probably it was made during this Rājasiṁha Pāṇḍya's time. It is interesting to note in this connection that in this bronze, unlike in any other of its class, there is a predominance of the lion *motif*, *e.g.*, there are lions on the two long sides of the pedestal; prominent *siṁha-mukha* on the knot of the waist-band and another equally prominent *siṁha-mukha* on the *śiraś-cakra*. Could this *motif* be taken to indicate a connection between this bronze and the king with the name *Rāja-siṁha* (lion among kings) to whose period we suppose this to belong? We, more than anybody else, are aware of the unsoundness of attribution based on such a flimsy ground. So it is not on this *motif* alone that we should decide upon the period and the author of the bronze but, on the other hand, only the stages of development of other details of the bronze, which are characteristic of sculpture of this period, that may be taken to give a clue to the age of the bronze independently. Anyway it is very unfortunate that as regards its date no reliable evidence is available just as in the case of the majority of other South Indian bronzes. If the date proposed here is accepted as a plausible one, then it will become clear that the school of sculpture that existed in the Pāṇḍyan country at that time was well developed. Although the Naṭeśa in question seems to be the sole example known so far, of this school, it is hoped that many more specimens may be unearthed in future which will throw significant light on the achievements of this school. Let us now describe the Naṭeśa figure.

[1] K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (1955), pp. 117–18, note 16.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is not so high, but it is very clearly depicted. There is the flower on top, but it has become insignificant. The crescent moon, as in previous Naṭeśas, is on the right side, near the top. The *Dātura* is small and is seen on the right just above the fillet. There is another projecting thing on the left side. The front of the *makuṭa* is decorated with the usual ornament with prongs. It is quite distinct although the number of its prongs is small. It encloses a small skull. Most interesting development noticed here is the spreading out of six *jaṭās* on either side. It is to be noted that even here the projection of the *jaṭās* is only about a quarter of the length of the whirling locks of Naṭeśas of subsequent periods. The fillet around the head, though narrow, is worked nicely. There is a long curved and slender *makara-kuṇḍala* in the right ear and a rather broad, not deep, *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear. It is not a simple rolled-up *patra*, like those in Śiva figures noticed above. It is ornate and its two ends are provided with rims so that it does not slip away from the ear-lobe. This, coupled with the fact that it looks hard, may be taken to indicate that it is of *svarṇa* (gold).

The face is slightly oval. The eyes are wide and prominent. The eye-brows are not flush with the face but seem to be attached to it. The nose is rather snub with a definite depression at the bridge but broad and prominent at the tip. The lips are normal. These chubby features are highly realistic and quite unlike those of any other bronze examined above. The expression is one of veiled joy coupled with supreme astonishment.

The neck is short; and there are two *kaṇṭhīs*. The longer one is broad and set with a gem in the middle. The *yajñopavīta* is flat and ribbon-like with floral designs on it. The *udara-bandha* too is of the same type, and does not show any provision for a flowing piece of cloth.

The torso is bent much to the right. Due to this, the line on the right side is inclined sharply. This seems to be rather unnatural. The left side, on the other hand, is done in a natural curve, the line of this being smooth, natural and beautiful. The nipples are, as usual, flat and circular but here the tips are prominently shown whereas in earlier bronzes, only the flat part of it is all that is usually seen. The shoulders are normal but their lines are refined. A pair of braided locks is seen on each shoulder beautifying it. Besides, there is a bunch of five pearly strings with a clasp towards the ends which are themselves shown curling this side and that side, hanging over the arm-pit. A small pendant is all that is met with in this place in the bronzes discussed just above. Here this detail is obviously developed.

Of the four arms, the two on the right side are joined upto the elbow in the characteristic way of one over the other. The two arms on the left side are separate on account of their poses. The bend of the front arm here is beautifully done unlike that

of the Nallūr Naṭeśa. The style of this feature is akin to that of the Kūram Naṭeśa; but while some amount of ruggedness is apparent in the latter, here it is refined. The fore-part of this arm seems to have been made separately and added, the reason for which was most probably that even while it was being cast this part of the arm broke and it was joined to the upper arm later. Otherwise, there would not be the uniformity of finish as is now seen between these two parts. The joining of the other arm to the shoulder is also well done and it is apparent from the harmony that exists between the arms and between them and the shoulder.

There are extremely well executed *keyūras* on the arms and their prongs are refined and almost stylised. Below them is a gem-set band. It has no projection on it and so it is not of the usual *vāji-bandha* of which an early example has already been met with in the Trivikrama from Siṅgānallūr, and in many other examples to be noticed below. Anyway it is worth noting that the fashion of showing a band below *keyūra* has become a regular feature by this time, a thing which is absent from bronzes of earlier times. In this figure, however, a band with a prominent gem in front is seen wound round each fore-arm, which is a unique feature met with in this alone. A set of three *valayas* with grooves on them, adorn the wrists. Rings are seen in all the fingers.

The joined arms of the right side are considerably away from the torso, which is brought about by the bend of the torso in order to maintain balance of the dance posture.

The emblems of *ḍamaru* and *agni* have changed their positions in this figure. In the upper right hand where the *ḍamaru* should be, there is the flame of fire. The form of the flame which has five tongues should be noted. Unlike in the case of Naṭeśas already examined there is no cup provided for it here and the shape of the central tongue is like that of a question mark standing on its head. The curl is prominent. And this tongue is closely followed by the other two prominent tongues of this side and by the two less prominent tongues of the right side, and the whole gives the flame the appearance of a *śaṅkha* (conch) kept topsy-turvy. It must be noted that this is the symbol for the word 'OM' used in early inscriptions.[1]

[1] A word about its significance may not be out of place here. It is known that this emblem of *agni* stands for destruction (of *avidyā*) as well as a symbol of *jñāna*. Leaving the aspect of destruction, and taking the latter aspect, it is but proper that the *sthapati* had chosen to symbolise it in the form of a *śaṅkha*. The sound of the *śaṅkha* is said to be the same as that of the *Praṇava* or 'OM' and hence the shape of the *śaṅkha* was employed by ancient scribes to represent the *Praṇava*. A majority of ancient inscriptions commence with this symbol. In a modified form this very same symbol is used in the same context even to this day in Tamilnāḍ and probably in other regions also. When a person knows the meaning of the *Praṇava*, in other words, the *nāda* (sound) of *śaṅkha*, he becomes a true *Jñāni*. The process of attaining to this state involves the removal or destruction of *ajñāna* or *avidyā* or ignorance. This is achieved by the fire of knowledge. Hence *śaṅkha* is made to look like a flame of fire also. It will be seen, therefore, that there is a symbol combining in itself in a subtle way two aspects of a great truth. Indeed the symbol has become great, and its creator a great *karma-yogin*. The manner of its depiction is superb and adds to the significance of the concept it represents.

A *ḍamaru* of exquisite workmanship is held in the upper left hand between the thumb and the middle finger. The lower right hand is as usual in the *abhaya* pose, and the corresponding left arm is in the *gaja-hasta* pose. This pose is noteworthy. In other figures of Naṭeśa this arm will be lifted up higher because in them the left leg is raised. Here it is low almost like that of the Kūram Naṭeśa, due to the fact that here the right leg is raised on account of which a necessity has arisen to point to the foot of this leg which is far away, by lowering the arm, as far as possible and by bending the hand as much possible, towards this foot.

The modelling of the arms is round, smooth and supple. The slight angularities met with in such figures as the Nallūr Naṭeśa are continued here also but the refinement of workmanship is such that this feature is not at all of an offending nature. In fact the lines by which the arms are composed are not only pure but also very delicate and smooth-curving. This quality is beautifully displayed by the modelling of the fingers which seem to throb with life. For their naturalism, beautiful proportions and delicacy of treatment they are probably unparalleled. Although this feature is exquisitely portrayed in other figures also, there it is rather effeminate and sensuous than impressive and forceful. This feature is seen at its best in the two front hands.

For the first time we see a serpent wound round the fore-arm of the lower right arm, which had since become standardised. The head of the serpent is broken.

The under garment consists of a pair of drawers. But unlike in the case of the bronzes discussed above, the loin-cloth of this bronze is not shown in wavy form. It is decorated with floral designs which make it ornate. The upper hem of the loin-cloth is clearly seen below the navel. Just below it, is wound round the *kaṭi-sūtra* or waist-band which is also decorated with floral designs. It has a beautiful knot in front. The *uttarīya* is wound twice round the waist; the bands are flat and beautiful and show flower patterns. They possess a knot in front from which issue two short ends, one on each thigh. A third end falls between the legs and it has a beautiful *simha-mukha* design on it. To the tip of this is hung in a hinge a pendant shaped like a leaf. This device is not met with in any other bronze known so far. In the place of projecting bows, sort ends of cloth are seen, and they do not project but are attached to the loin-cloth itself. This is a novel feature because in bronzes where the ends are shown they project out after looping, and in others the ends are not at all seen.

The right leg is lifted up while the left is planted on the back of the demon Apasmāra Purusha or Muyalaka. The posture of the raised leg is beautifully balanced and natural. In spite of this, the charm that is usually associated with the postures of the common form (*i.e.*, *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form) is obviously lacking here. Thus it is a fine example of

the ideal way of showing a *karaṇa i.e.*, it is a *lakshaṇa–kṛiti* whereas the other form, as immortalised by the Velāṅkaṇṇi and Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśas (Figs. 117, 164), is both beautiful and popular.

The workmanship of the legs is quite in keeping with the whole figure. Their treatment is beautiful, in spite of the slightly sophisticated modelling, and their proportions are fine. The disposition of the limbs makes it not only a fine study in balancing and poise but also a remarkable one in harmony and rhythm.

The back side of this figure as usual, displays a few interesting details. The *jaṭā–makuṭa* shows clearly how the ends of the *jaṭās* are disposed as if flowing on either side. The treatment of the beginnings as well as the ends of these *jaṭās* is beautiful, although a bit of stiffness met with in the bronzes of this period is seen here also. Anyway the design of the spreading *jaṭās* is wrought with consummate skill and imagination. The space between the two groups of *jaṭās* is ornamented. Below this ornament is seen the *śiraś-cakra*, not worked in the usual form of a lotus flower or a wheel but in the form of a *simha–mukha* from the wide mouth of which hangs a broad ribbon–like tassel ending in a pointed jewel. The braided locks of hair are arranged in a beautiful manner on the back. There are two sets of locks, one shorter than the other. As these locks of hair are shown in the form of a long strand alternating a short one, no space between them is left and therefore these strands of hair seem to be thick. Further, instead of being simple strands they show grooves on them and the tips of the longer strands show a tendency to twist sharply. Fig. 55

The workmanship of the torso and arms and of the ornaments is also clearly seen in this side. It is interesting to note that while on the right side the arms are bulky because of the joining of the two arms, on the left side, only one hand is seen and its posture coupled with the smoothly curving line of this side is singularly charming. On the other hand, the sharp angle in which the right side is treated above the *udara-bandha* is rather unnatural. It does not seem to hormonize with the other features.

The waist-band seems to be two-stranded and it has a long knot in the middle. The bands of the *uttarīya* are specially noteworthy. Most interesting is the end of the loin-cloth that goes under the sashes and the waist-band, to be tucked in the middle of the waist. The projecting tip of this end is arranged beautifully fan-wise. It is not bent and has grooves just as a fan has. In other bronzes this is simpler in workmanship.

The beauty of balancing the figure on a single leg is fully seen from this side. With a slender arm and two legs on one side and heavy torso, three arms and head on the other, the figure seems to remain partly on the ground and partly in the air.

The dwarf, beneath the left foot of the Lord, is comparatively large. He is lying flat on the *āsana* on his front side. On his back, the Lord has planted his left leg and is dancing. Due to the weight of the Lord the demon's stomoch has bulged out and this is realistically delineated. His face is round and shows prominent features. The expression is one of amazement rather than sorrow. His hair is short and curly and it is treated like a sieve with big holes. He wears necklaces, also *valayas*, *udara-bandha*, shorts and *pādasaras*. The end of the loin-cloth tucked at the back is beautiful. He holds in his left hand the second serpent, said to have fallen from the arm of the Lord and his right hand is held in the *āhūya* pose. The treatment of this dwarf is on the whole refined and realistic. The dwarf lies on the *bhadrāsana* which is apparently ornate. It is heavy and has the usual mouldings. The central indentation of the longer sides has, in each of the three spaces formed by the four short vertical spacers, a beautiful seated lion with twisted and looped tail. These spacers and the indentation of the shorter sides bear diamond patterns. A spike is seen on either side. Interestingly, it is loose-fitted into the hole of the projecting plate and is supported by a prancing composite animal with lion's body and elephant's head. The above mentioned lions and this composite animal are executed in a spirited and powerful manner. This is another distinctly novel feature of this bronze not met with in the bronzes discussed so far.

Thus in every respect this bronze is a remarkable specimen of its kind. Though it is the only specimen, known of the school, yet that the school was vigorous and was capable of producing works of merit is borne out amply by this Naṭeśa alone. As has been said above if this was done under the orders of a Pāṇḍyan king, then that king's cultural attainments and interest in arts hardly require any other confirmatory evidence.

That the mode of dance as represented by this Naṭeśa is different from the other common one, is well understood, by the Tamil term *kālmāṟi-āḍiya* given to this mode. This is, however, only a popular nomenclature. The other mode of dance also known as the Chidambaram form of Naṭeśa, is popularly called as *ānanda-tāṇḍava*, but it is technically called *bhujaṅga-trāsitakaraṇa*. The mode of dance of the Naṭeśa in question is technically called *bhujaṅgāñcita*. In both these terms the first word is *bhujaṅga* (serpent). The difference is seen only in the second word which is *trāsita* (frightened) in one and in the other *añcita* (contracted), the fright and contraction being due to the presence of the serpent. It may be said, therefore, that except for the reversed legs, there is practically very little difference between these two modes (*karaṇas*) of dance.

EARLY CHOḶA BRONZES

According to the above study, the bronzes dating up to about the beginning of the 10th century A.D. seem to have had a unifrom course of development both in style and

decorative details. Politically, South India was divided between the Pallavas and the Choḷas and did not as yet come under the rule of a single royal dynasty. So the name of "Pallava-Choḷa transition" was given to the period as well as to the specimens of bronzes. From about the first decade of the 10th century or more precisely, from the date of accession of Parāntaka I in 907 A.D., the political map of South India rapidly changed. He was fortunate to inherit a well-consolidated kingdom[1] but did not keep quiet. He had an ambitious scheme of extending his territory from coast to coast and even beyond it, in which he largely succeeded. Having satisfied his desire to be a conqueror of new kingdoms, not conquered by his predecessors, such as Madurai and Ceylon, on account of which he got the title of *Maduraiyum-Īḷamum-koṇḍa*, he settled down to do constructive works for the benefit of his subjects. Though a staunch Śaivite and an ardent devotee of Lord Naṭarāja of Chidambaram, Parāntaka gave freedom to the followers of other religions as well. He ruled thus for well-nigh half a century (*c.* 907 A.D. to 955 A.D.) and his rule ushered in prosperity for the people which was reflected in the various fields of cultural and creative activities. As nearly the whole of the first half of the 10th century A.D. was occupied by his rule which extended almost over the entire South India as well as over a part of Ceylon too, the results of the above mentioned activities apparently possess more or less uniform characteristics irrespective of the differences of localities. Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's observations about the reign of this great king are worth quoting here. He says: "In fact Parāntaka's reign was a great epoch in the history of South Indian temple architecture, and the work of temple-building begun by Āditya was continued vigorously during the best part of his reign."

There was no stable rule in the South for nearly thirty years after Parāntaka I. But this state of affairs in politics does not seem to have affected the cultural life of the people. There was an efflorescence in the fields of religion and culture. Members of the royal family took active part in these activities.

Cultural activities continued to flourish during the reign of Rājarāja I, who came to the Choḷa throne about 985 A.D. and ruled till 1014 A.D. In fact, a worthy descendant of Parāntaka I, Rājarāja I carried every aspect of culture that had its beginning in the earlier period to its logical conclusion. This, coupled with his imperialistic activities, not only in South India, but also in Ceylon, where he achieved distinction of a high order, made him really great. In spite of his Śaivite persuasion of which the standing monument is the Bṛihadīśvara Temple at Tanjore, Rājarāja I, like his forefathers, also was tolerant towards the followers of other faiths, which is testified to not only by his famous endowments to the Buddhist *vihāra* at Nāgappaṭṭiṇam but also by his sister Kundavai's concern over the building of a Jaina shrine. In short, "the thirty years of

1 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

Rājarāja's rule constitute the formative period in the history of the Coḷa monarchy. In the organization of the civil service and the army, in art and architecture, we see at work powerful forces newly liberated by the progressive imperialism of the line."[1] Naturally great progress was made in the art of bronzes also, as testified to by numerous beautiful specimens of the art, produced to meet the great demand for them from temples where the rituals were growing in leaps and bounds during this period.

At the close of his reign, Rājarāja I left behind a glorious legacy in arts and crafts as well as in administration, arms, extent of kingdom and prestige, to his son and successor, Rājendra I. He became the ruler in 1012 A.D. and continued as such till 1044 A.D. Though "the history of Rājendra's reign is very largely the history of the extensive wars and conquests,"[2] which is borne out by such titles as *Muḍikoṇḍa-Choḷa* and *Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-Choḷa*, yet, like his father, he was also greatly interested in the advancement of culture and religion, arts and literature. The title of *Paṇḍita-Choḷa* borne by him is sufficient testimony for his interest in the above mentioned aspects of social life. But more significant attestation for this is afforded by the magnificent temple at Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-choḷapuram, which is now unfortunately much ruined, but should have been as glorious as the Bṛihadīśvara temple of Tanjore, the *magnum opus* of his father. Even in its present ruined condition the temple of Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-choḷapuram is really a treasure-house of sculpture and a rare specimen of architecture. During his period certain new aspects of temple ritual such as building separate shrines to goddesses, side by side with the main shrine to the Lord, also developed with the result that demand for images in metal was keener than ever before. No wonder, therefore, that under the patronage of such a powerful ruler as Rājendra, ample facilities were provided for the growth of the art of bronzes too. They include not only a variety of representations of the gods of the Hindu pantheon but also a number of bronzes representing Buddhist and Jain deities, which testifies to Rājendra's catholicity of outlook. There are, amongst them, secular bronzes including portraits of important personages. Thus every branch of the art was developed to great heights. This state of affairs was continued during the period of Rājendra I's immediate successors also and till about the accession of Kulottuṅga I in 1070 A.D.

In view of the fact that the formal and decorative qualities of the products and technical efficiency, of the art of bronzes, of the period from the reign of Parāntaka I to about the beginning of Kulottuṅga I's reign were gradually evolving from a stage of great experimentation to one of artistic standardisation, amongst the productions of this period certain amount of unity of style is perceptible. Hence for the purpose of the present study the above mentioned period is given the name of "Early Choḷa" and

[1] *Ibid.*, p.168.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195.

the bronzes that are assigned to this period as accordingly termed as the Early Choḷa bronzes. Some scholars have grouped the specimens of sculpture belonging to the Choḷa period in South Indian history, under three groups namely early Choḷa, mid-Choḷa and later Choḷa.[1] But in view of the overlapping of the late Pallava rule with the rule of the earliest imperial Choḷa kings we have taken that period to be the transition period, with the result only two other phases of the Choḷa art history remain which we call as the Early Choḷa and Later Choḷa. From the end of the 11th century till the end of the Choḷa rule the art of bronzes, for that matter, arts in general, became gradually conventionalised although there are a few examples belonging to this period displaying originality, vigour and beauty.

In their noble endeavours, the kings of this period seem to have been guided by great men of learning and teachers of religion. Prominent among them were "Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, the author who arranged the Śaiva Canon substantially in the form in which we now find it "[2] and who was " most probably contemporary of Rājarāja I and Rājendra I " ; Karuvūr Devar, the preceptor of Rājarāja I; Nāthamuni, the compiler of the Vaishṇava Prabandhams, belonging to the early half of the 10th century; Rāmānuja Āchārya contemporary of Rājendra I and his successors; and Jaina teachers that lived in such places as Jina Kāñchī and the Bauddha monks like Buddhamitra of Poṉparṟi and of the *vihāra* of Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, all belonging to the 11th century. These men were primarily responsible for the growth of activities connected with their institutions. The existence of so many great men belonging to different religions in the period, contributed to the complexity of as well as interest in the religious life. " There was a perpetual stirring and mixing together of various creeds each influencing the others and being influenced in turn. As a result of this long process of assimilation, the Buddhist *vihāra*, the Jain *Paḷḷi* and the Hindu temple presented many similarities in their worship...and festivities."[3] On account of this, the works of art employed by the followers of each of these religions also showed similarities in themes and details. The style of these works was, as has been said above, uniform due to the fact that their creators, the *sthapatis*, were of one class, practising the traditions of art that obtained in the period.

It is necessary to mention here the important fact that amongst the numerous bronzes of this period, luckily a few are inscribed, and one with a date also. A comparative study of the details of uninscribed bronzes with those of the inscribed ones reveals several points of similarity which proves to some extent the fact that their attribution to this period is not altogether without basis.

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[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 709.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 637.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 657.

This early Chola period being a long one extending from about 910 A.D. to about the end of the 11th century it is conceivable that there should have occurred changes in the traditions of art in respect of the representations of various themes and decorative details, just as in other aspects of social life. In fact, the examples of bronzes show some differences in the addition or omission of certain details and in the depiction of certain themes. Innovations such as portraiture begin to be in vogue. So it seems advantageous to group the bronzes again, on the basis of style, under categories each of which is characterised by certain marked features. This is to some extent possible because the majority of the bronzes that are ascribable to the period upto the time of the accession of Rājarāja I have certain common features. Similarly the bronzes belonging to Rājarāja I's period show features slightly more developed than those of the period prior to it, but which in turn show features slightly different from those of the bronzes that may be assigned to about the middle of the 11th century A.D. or so. We know that the period prior to Rājarāja I's time was dominated for the most part, by Parāntaka I. So the bronzes ascribable to this period may be considered as the products of the school that may be called after this noble and great king. In the same manner the bronzes attributed to the time of Rājarāja I may be said to be the products of the school that flourished during his reign period. And those that are attributed to the 11th century A.D. may be called as examples of the school of Rājendra I, because he was the most powerful and important of the Chola kings of this century, his reign period ranging from 1012 to 1044 A.D.

SCHOOL OF PARĀNTAKA I

Fig. 56 Among the examples of this school, the Vīṇādhara from Belūr [1] seems to be one of the earliest. The authors of the *Catalogue* describe it as follows :

"Standing. Height 67, 89 *cm.* Axe, antelope; *kaṭaka, kaṭaka.* Treasure trove, Belur, Attur Taluk, Salem District.

"This slender and gracefully poised image is unfortunately most heavily corroded. The treatment of the face and the folds of the loin-cloth is simple and effective, but the high relief and wide separation of the two necklaces, especially of the central ornament of the lower one, as well as the strong moulding of the headdress, prevent us from regarding it as definitely of Chola type. The breast and the back of the head of the antelope are towards Śiva. The lotus pedestal is particularly good."

Apparently the authors are struck with the workmanship not only of the figure but also of the pedestal. But they were sceptical about the early date of the figure on account of the strong moulding of the headdress and the treatment of the necklaces

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 109, Pl. XIX, Fig. 1.

which they unfortunately imagined to be not characteristic of bronzes of Early Chola type. Probably this was due to the fact that at the time when the *Catalogue* was published not many early images were available. But as has already been demonstrated, now the position is better and quite a few early bronzes are available for comparative study. Thus slenderness and grace are characteristic of bronzes belonging to the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century A.D. Besides, the headdress in such bronzes as the Nallūr Naṭeśa and the Vīṇādhara from Tanjore are as strongly moulded as it is here. Similar is the case with the *kaṇṭhī*. For example, there is only one *kaṇṭhī* with prominent gem in front, on the neck of the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44) from Tiruveṭkaḷam. Above all even in the description, extracted from the *Catalogue*, the beauty of the *padmāsana* is recognised and it may now be affirmed that such beautiful *āsanas* are characteristic of bronzes of early periods only. It may be argued that the pedestal alone of this image is ancient, the figure being made and fixed to it at a later period. Amongst the numerous bronzes known so far, no such instance has been noticed. It has, however, happened sometimes that the original pedestal is substituted by later ones when the former, being hollow and therefore liable to be damaged, was broken or missing. In the present case the features of the figure are themselves proof positive to declare that the figure itself is an early one and that the pedestal was intended for it. In order to show its importance it is necessary to give a fuller description of the bronze.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is high and on top of it is a flower which is prominent. The rest of the headdress is obliterated by corrosion. The face is also spoiled in a similar way. A simple *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the left ear and the right ear is empty. The neck is short. There are two *kaṇṭhīs*, each displaying a prominent gem-like thing in its middle. These are similar to those of the Vīṇādhara (Fig. 40) and the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44). The *yajñopavīta* shows only two strands. The lower one is thick and short. The *udara-bandha* is broad and it does not show any decoration on it nor any prominent gem in front. The torso is beautifully moulded. The chest is broad and the portion below it is narrow. The lines of the sides are graceful. The fold at the stomach is treated in a superb manner. The shoulders are normal. On each of them is seen a strand of hair. Flowers are seen in the lock on the right shoulder as in some of the examples noticed above. There is the interesting and characteristic pendant seen on this shoulder. It is three-stranded, each strand ending with a heart-like design, instead of the single-stranded ones seen in several examples dealt with above. But this feature is somewhat akin to that of the same found in the Naṭeśa from Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi (Fig. 54) where, however, more than three strands are seen.

There are two arms on either side and they are joined in such a way that the upper arm is seen to emerge out from the back side of the elbow of the lower arm. The

manner in which this is worked is apparently archaic. There is a *nāga-valaya* on each arm with a single complete band round it. On each wrist are seen three *valayas* of simple workmanship. There is no other band as seen in the Trivikrama (Fig. 53) or Naṭeśa (Fig. 54). The two front hands are held in the significant postures of holding something which is supposed to be *vīṇā*. The treatment of the gestures especially of the *kaṭaka* pose of the right hand, even in its extremely corroded condition is splendid. The emblem in the upper right hand is missing and there is a crudely worked antelope in the corresponding left hand. The arms are slim like the torso. Nevertheless their modelling is perfect and their proportions are beautiful.

The loin-cloth shows the folds in the wave-over-wave form which is highly developed in this. At any rate the simplicity of this detail as seen in the Kirātamūrti is absent from here. The waist-band has a beautiful *simha-mukha* clasp from the mouth of which a bow-like loop of the *uttarīya* is seen issuing on either side. From the centre of the mouth hangs down an end of the loin-cloth. The idea to fill this gap is interesting and the manner in which the decorative element, which is shaped like an isocelles triangle with apex hanging below is worked, is noteworthy. The thread of the waist-band which in other bronzes is seen issuing from the head of the lion-face, is hardly recognisable here, because the parts of the strand attached to the head have become more or less like horns here. The *uttarīya* is wound twice round the waist and it does not show any knots or bows or ends on either side.

Fig. 57 The legs too are slender and proportionate. There are *pādasaras* on the feet. The left leg is slightly bent, suggesting graceful movement. This stance adds beauty to the figure. This may, therefore, be taken as characteristic of early figures. The paucity of representations of the theme in similar stances in later periods supports this hypothesis.

The back view of the figure shows the *jaṭā-makuṭa* clearer because here there is less of corrosion than in front. No *śiraś-cakra* is seen here. Two sets of three twisted strands of hair with wide space between two of them and a wider space between the two sets, hang on the back. In this respect this is quite akin to the Nallūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 51). They are not many and between two strands there is as much space as exists in the Naṭeśa.

The other details too are better preserved here. Particularly noteworthy are the lines of the two sides, which flow smoothly and in a charming manner. While enclosing the mass of the figure which is beautifully moulded the lines of the sides add to the beauty of the form. The bend of the left leg is treated in a classical manner.

Now to the *āsana*. Here the figure stands on a circular *padmāsana* over a cubical *bhadrāsana*. Both the *āsanas* are distinctly and perfectly worked. In the

Vishṇu image (Fig. 19) of an earlier period we saw this feature rather in its beginning stage. In the Maitreya from Melayūr (Fig. 28) there is only a beautiful *padmāsana*, and no sign of its having been fixed to a *bhadrāsana* is seen. The *bhadrāsanas* of all the Naṭeśas and other figures examined above have no *padmāsana*, except in the case of the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44) where a fine *padmāsana*, in very low relief almost indistinguishable from the plate on which it is carved, is seen. So it is only in the bronze under discussion that we have come across, for the first time, not only the two *āsanas* together but also they being moulded as a single item. It may be noted in this connection that in the subsequent periods, an attempt was made to make these *āsanas* separately and place one over the other after fixing the figure to the *padmāsana*.

The petals of the lotus are exquisitely worked. The upper portion is high and only one row of petals is seen on the *bhadrāsana*. They do not bear lines demarcating the end or the middle part. Nor are their tips curved up. Their style is almost akin to that of the petals of the *padmāsana* of the Kirātamūrti and that of the lotus of the Maitreya to some extent. In the case of the Maitreya figure, the petals seem to be distinct from each other and are less broad than they are here.

The *bhadrāsana* is simple and its mouldings are pleasing. There is a spike on each side of this *āsana*. The manner of attaching them to the stand is still slightly archaic.

Thus the figure of Vīṇādhara is one of the important specimens of the art of bronze that has carried the story of the art a step further than what we have seen in the bronzes examined immediately above. It may, therefore, be assigned to the first quarter of the 10th century.

The bronze representing standing Buddha (ht. 89 *cm*) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam[1] seems to belong to about the same period. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran gives a detailed description of it.[2] Fig. 58

Apparently there is little that can be added to the above description. However, one or two points may be emphasised here. In view of the fact that its style is akin to that of the bronzes such as the Nallūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 51), especially in the treatment of the details of the face and arms, but a bit more restrained than that, this bronze may be assigned to a period slightly later than that to which that Naṭeśa has been assigned. To this the form of the *jvāla* on the head seems to lend support. Its style is somewhat akin to that of the flame met with in the Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi Naṭeśa (Fig. 54).

The beauty of the *padmāsana* has been well recognised by the learned author of the *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam Bronzes*, who calls it "a real *padma*". Here a word seems necessary.

1 T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*. Pl. V, Fig. 1.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

When this *padma* is compared with the *padma* of the Vīṇādhara discussed above, some minor differences are clearly seen. While there the upper part of the lotus is larger in size, here it is smaller than the lower part. Secondly the petals of the *āsana* of the Vīṇādhara are simple in style and do not show prominently any curving at their tips or projection in their middle. Here on the other hand these are emphasised. In the previous instance, both the *padmāsana* and the *bhadrāsana* are moulded in one piece in somewhat an archaic manner. There it has been stated that only from a slightly later period the *sthapatis* began to do the two *āsanas* separately. The present figure seems to be one of the earliest specimens where this practice is evident. It must however be added here, that there are a number of bronzes belonging to later periods where both the *āsanas* are moulded as a single piece. But their style is quite different from that of the *āsanas* of the Vīṇādhara (Fig. 56).

Above all the modelling of the figure is superb. Although it lacks to some extent the beautiful rhythm that pervades the whole of the figures of Trivikrama (Fig. 53) and the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44), yet in this are found the beginnings of a new treatment of the lines and mass of figures of which further developments may be seen in the Rāma from Paruttiyūr (Fig. 90), in the other standing Buddha and the seated Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Figs. 152, 179), and in the Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 96).

Mr. Ramachandran says that the type of this figure is similar to that of Amarāvatī etc., which is followed by the description, "The figures are delicate and slender...Face oval..." It is necessary here to point out that though the theme is the same in both the cases, as there is considerable difference in the treatment of the one and the same theme belonging to different periods and places, there is evident, in the treatment of this Buddha, characteristics of sculptures of the 10th century A.D., and it has little resemblance to the treatment of the Buddha images from Amarāvatī, Goli and Sārnāth.

Besides, this Buddha is important from the point of view of its size. It is one of the few biggest standing Buddhas in bronze met with so far. That it was intended to be an *utsava-vigraha* is rightly stressed by Ramachandran. From this it is clear that the Buddhists vied with the Hindus in elaborating the temple rituals including the taking out of images of deities in procession. Whatever may be the other consequences of this practice, it has done immense service for the promotion of the art of bronzes. Had there been no elaboration of temple rituals, there would have been no occasion to produce masterpieces of bronzes such as this Buddha and the Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 164) which have been acknowledged to rank amongst the best of their kind in the world.

The bronze representing a goddess[1] now in the Freer Art Gallery, Washington D.C., is an interesting specimen and its features necessitate its examination next. Fig. 59

The figure stands in *ābhaṅga* posture.[2] Headdress is arranged in the form of a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*. A beautiful fillet adorns the forehead. Face is oval and the features are not very sharp. Expression in the face is contemplative. There are no ornaments in the ears, and the extended earlobes hang down in a naturalistic manner.

The neck is high and beautifully moulded. Two necklets are seen on it. One is small and it seems to represent the *māṅgalya-sūtra* (*Tāliccaraḍu* in Tamil). The other necklet is broad and probably gem-set. *Yajñopavīta* is of simple thread. Its curves are graceful and flow smoothly. The breasts are full and beautifully modelled. According to the texts dealing with the characteristics of ideal human being, the breasts of a woman should be developed in such a manner that no space is seen between them. The *sthapati* who made this figure seems to have borne this idea in his mind when he executed this figure. By depicting the waist of the figure in an attenuated manner, the *sthapati's* familiarity with the texts dealing with ideal men and women is confirmed because according to these texts an ideal woman is characterised by slender-waisted or creeper-like-waisted (*i.e.*, *latā-madhyā* in Sanskrit and *koḍiyiḍaiyāḷ* in Tamil). The naval portion is also treated with taste and refinement. In all these respects this bronze is seen to resemble very much the Umā of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Somāskanda (Fig. 36) dealt with above. These characteristics especially the beautiful modelling of the torso including the magnificently realistic bosom, are rarely met with in later bronzes representing a woman. The shoulders, however, droop much. Perhaps this feature is intended to emphasise another characteristic of an ideal woman that she should bend a little in front on account of the weight of her full breasts. On the arms are seen *nāga-valayas* which have become perfect bands here. Below this *valaya*, on each arm, near the elbow, is another double-band. This probably stands for the *vāji-bandha*. In one or two earlier bronzes *e.g.*, Trivikrama (Fig. 53) and Naṭeśa (Fig. 54) a similar band is seen. More developed bands with a prominent projection on the outside are seen in bronzes to be examined below. Three *valayas* (bangles) are seen on each wrist; and rings are present in the fingers. The right hand is in *kaṭaka* pose and the left is in *lola* pose. The modelling of the arms and fingers is elegant and the lines of the left arm are apparently rhythmic and smoothly flowing. The treatment of the fingers of both the hands is exceptionally tender and delicate and not a trace of stiffness or vigour is seen in them.

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Coḷas* (1955), Pl. XV, Fig. 31.

[2] Our earlier description of the *bhaṅga* of this as *tribhaṅga*, on p. 754 of Prof. Sastri's book requires to be changed.

The *sāri* or lower garment is rendered like a pair of trousers closely covering the legs. Its treatment, interestingly enough, is in the wave-upon-wave form, the ebbs of the waves being subdued. In the bronzes to be noticed below, further development of this feature is prominently seen. Around the waist are seen two or three bands with a simple knot in front. Two ends probably of the lower garment are seen. One of them is depicted as falling on the left thigh. The other end with its tip worked in a zig-zag fashion falls between the thighs but attached to the right thigh. It is to be noted that this does not reach even upto the right knee. In later bronzes representing goddesses or women this end is seen falling down to the ankle. There is a *pādasara* on each foot. Right leg is slightly bent and is in the posture of moving. Left leg is firmly planted on the pedestal.

Both the legs, like the arms, are slender and beautiful. Yet the slight emphasis on the knee-cap is apparently characteristic of the traditions of art of the period.

Padmāsana alone is seen. Here it is much more developed than in any of the bronzes discussed above. The doubling of the lotus is clearly demarcated and the petals have become mere patterns and have lost the naturalism seen in those of the pedestals of earlier bronzes. The shape of the *āsana* seems to be neither circular nor square. This irregularity in form is seen in some of the later bronzes too. Its ornate and stiff character makes one pause for some time regarding its contemporaneity with the figure.
Fig. 60 At the back the slender headgear enhances the elongate character of the figure. The hair in twisted strands arranged rather closely, falls gracefully on the back of the neck. The extreme naturalism of the modelling is apparent from the manner in which the entire back is treated. It is this view that brings out clearly the superb workmanship of the figure.

This figure may be said to be an excellent study of a woman in slow movement, almost an adult woman of a slightly serious disposition as revealed by the contemplative expression. The proportions are perfect and the lines are fine and rhythmic. The treatment of the masses is exquisite and the decorative embellishments are tasteful and kept quite under restraint. Further its affinity to the Umā of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Somāskanda is great. In short this is a remarkable specimen of the art of bronzes as obtained in the first quarter of the 10th century A.D. The provenance of this is not definitely known; but from the modelling of the bust and the limbs, which is somewhat akin to the Pattini Devī[1] from Ceylon, we suspected elsewhere[2] that this also belonged to Ceylon. So far no evidence has come forth necessitating the revision of that view. If it is accepted, then this bronze may be said to be one of the earliest bronzes to be

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Fig. 300.
[2] P. R. Srinivasan, *Description of Plates* in *The Colas* (1955) by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, p. 754.

produced in Ceylon by a *sthapati* who was steeped in the traditions of art of the Tamilian school.

It has been identified doubtfully as representing either Pārvatī or Lakshmī by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri goes a step further and says that "it may even be the portrait of a queen, say Sembiyan-mahādevī." [1] Our description of the figure given above will show that it is not a representation of either Lakshmī or a queen. For, if it is to be Lakshmī then it should have either *kuca-bandha* or in the absence of this, its arms should have been shown in reversed postures *i.e.*, the right arm should be in *lola* and the left hand in *kaṭaka*, as in the case of Śrīdevī of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123). As it does not satisfy these requirements it does not represent Lakshmī. If it represents Pārvatī, then ordinarily it should wear a *jaṭā-makuṭa*.[2] Here it is probably a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* which is seen in some early Pārvatīs too. Hence it may or may not be Pārvatī. Rarely portraits of queens are shown with *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, and if a little subjectivism is permitted, this bronze has the look of a representation of a goddess rather than that of a portrait of a woman. So, it may not even be a portrait. According to us, it may represent Bhūdevī as its features satisfy the description of that goddess or the goddess Devasenā, one of the consorts of Subrahmaṇya. Bronzes representing Vishṇu group or Subrahmaṇya group are rare in Ceylon; so, between our ascription of the figure to that country and its identification, there seems to be some incompatibility. The meditative expression, however, makes the identification of this as Pārvatī more probable, because Bhūdevī and Devasenā figures do not usually display seriousness of this kind. If this is accepted then the incompatibility becomes much less, as Ceylon seems to have produced more bronzes representing Śaivite themes than bronzes representing gods of other faiths.

Another very interesting and important specimen of the art belonging to the earliest phase of the school of Parāntaka I is the standing four-armed and single-faced Subrahmaṇya from Kīḻaiyūr, Tanjore District. It wears probably a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* with a prominent fillet at its bottom. The face is rather roundish. There are *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears and a broad gem-set *kaṇṭhī* on the neck. Besides its excellent porportions and splendidly slender modelling which is a characteristic feature of the sculptures of this phase, the other details of the figure such as the *channavīra* with a median band hanging from it, the beautifully flowing *yajñopavīta*, the simple ribbon-like sashes with a wide loop in front and with their ends falling one on each thigh and the bows and hanging ends of the *uttarīya* on either side are noteworthy. The other very interesting detail of this figure is the emblem held in the upper right hand. It is the **Fig. 61**

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 726.

[2] See *Catalogue*, pp. 73–74, for an interesting discussion on this detail.

vajra and its shape is peculiar. It is shown as a rod with each of its pointed ends worked as three faceted. This form of the weapon is not only interesting but also ancient. In later bronzes of this deity this is shown as a rod possessing a trident at each of its two ends *e.g.*, the Subrahmaṇya from Taṇḍantoṭṭam (Fig. 72) and the Devasenāpati (Fig. 106). What is held in the upper left hand is not clear. Probably it is an *akṣha-mālā*. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left hand is on the *kaṭi*. The posture is *samabhaṅga* and its stiffness coupled with the serious expression of the face is quite in keeping with the theme namely Subrahmaṇya as Brahma-śāstā. A great majority of the sculptural representations of Subrahmaṇya belonging to periods upto this time show only this aspect which indicates clearly the preference of the people for this form of the deity to others. Being the very first bronze of its kind it assumes a special importance. The beauty of the figure is enhanced by the simple *padmāsana* over *bhadrāsana* which is certainly in early style. Notwithstanding this interesting pedestal of an early type, in view of the slightly developed other details this bronze may be said to come after the above goddess. Like the latter, this piece is also a masterpiece of the art and it is apparent from the excellence of its workmanship.

Fig. 62 The Vīṇādhara from Tiruppurambiyam now in the Tanjore Art Gallery may also be attributed to the same period. It has, as usual, four arms, and stands in beautiful *tribhaṅga* posture. The treatment of the whole figure in a slender and light manner, the restraint that is apparent in its decorations and the smooth modelling, will at once impress any one that it is really a fine specimen of the art produced according to ancient traditions.

It has a high *jaṭā-makuṭa* with the crescent and the *Dātura* flower probably on the proper right and proper left side respectively of it and with a beautifully worked pronged ornament. The dressing up of the *jaṭās* is itself interesting. The fillet is comparatively simpler. The face is round and chubby like that of the above Subrahmaṇya and the features are not so very sharp. The eye-brows and eyes, especially the former seem to be indicated by incised lines rather than by ridges. The nose and lips are delicate and tender. The ears, characteristically, are not very elongate and are devoid of ornaments. The expression is contemplative. According to the requirement of iconography, the head is slightly tilted to proper right, and this has added to the charm of the figure.

The neck is normal, and two broad *kaṇṭhīs* are seen on it. The *yajñopavīta* shows only two strands. The upper one has a bead and the lower one turns sharply to right at the point of the navel. It is comparatively short. The double-bell clasp with the usual knot is simple. The torso is slender but the lines of the sides do not seem to be so graceful and rhythmic as those of the other Vīṇādhara in the Tanjore Art Gallery (Fig. 40) discussed above. Nor is the chest so well worked. The shoulders are, however,

treated in a manner suggesting strength. There is the usual pendant on the right shoulder but it is flanked by a tassel on either side. Its style is much advanced. On the opposite shoulder is seen a strand of hair curling in a beautiful manner. That the practice of providing this shoulder also with a decorative piece has already been noticed in early figures. A more elaborate form of this decoration is seen in the Lokanātha Avalokiteśvara from Kadri (Fig. 103) where besides the strand of hair, the pendant ornament and the looped string are also seen.

The arms are beautifully moulded; the fingers are particularly graceful. *Nāga-valaya*-type of armlet is seen on each arm. Besides, elbow ornament without the prominent projecting piece is seen. It may be mentioned here that in the bronzes produced during the early phase of the school the projecting piece seems to have been omitted. It reappears in the specimens of the art belonging to the later phase of this school as well as in the specimens of the school of Rājarāja I and Rājendra I. A set of three *valayas* is seen on each wrist. The manner of showing the attachment of the upper arms to the lower ones is not good. The upper right hand holds the deer by its hind legs which are seen between the first two fingers. Similarly the *paraśu* (battle axe) is held in the upper left hand. The reverse order of holding the emblems is peculiar to this figure and its significance is not known. The lower hands are in the posture of holding something. In view of the fact that the lower left arm is kept so low, it may be thought that its hand did not hold a bow; so, it may not represent Tripurāntaka. The other alternative is Vīṇādhara Śiva which is quite a plausible identification. But it is interesting to note that the serpent which in Naṭeśa figures is usually seen on the lower right fore-arm is seen here on the corresponding left arm, and the presence of this detail helps to identify the figure as Tripurāntaka.

The legs are also slender and beautiful. But compared with the part above the waist they seem to be slightly more elongated than necessary, which is found to be a characteristic of the bronzes of this period. This manner of treatment of the trunk and the legs indicates that the *sthapatis* while bestowing all care and attention on the part upto the waist, were somewhat less decided about the treatment of the part below the waist. The right leg is firmly planted on the *āsana* while the left leg is slightly bent which suggests the gentle and graceful movement of the figure. The loin-cloth is plain. One end of it which is shown as a triangle in front is noteworthy, because its tip is blunted whereas in some of the later figures to be dealt with below this tip extends further below, in the form of a small dagger. There are only two bands on the waist. One of them which is actually a girdle shows oval designs on it in front. The other one is probably a thick plain sash.

The back view of this bronze shows the *śiraś-cakra* in the regular wheel pattern with eight spokes in it. This is similar to the *śiraś-cakras* of the Kīḻappūdanūr Fig. 63

Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38) and the Arjuna (Fig. 46) from Tiruveṭkaḷam. This is indicative of the fact that this bronze is nearer in date to these two bronzes. The knob of the axle is simple and from it hangs a group of three tassels. Below this ornament, the braided locks with their tips twisted into beautiful curls hang on the back. The manner of twisting is obviously an improvement over that which is seen in the Nallūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 51) and the Belūr Vīṇādhara (Fig. 56). The pendent ornament that separates the braided locks into two sets is seen prominently. The *yajñopavīta* is broad in this side and the upper strand joins the lower one up near the tips of the locks of hair. Just as in the case of many an early specimen the *nāga-valaya* ornament shows its head portion on the arms in this side also. Though the elbow ornament is distinctly seen on the left elbow, it is not seen so on the right arm. The absence of the end of the *kaccha* usually tucked in the middle of the waist is noteworthy. The beauty of the modelling of the figure as well as its poise is clearly evident from this side.

There are *pādasaras* on the feet. The figure stands on a *padmāsana* which in its form seems to be similar to the *padmāsana* of the Kirātamūrti from Tiruveṭkaḷam and the Subrahmaṇya from Kīḻaiyūr (Fig. 61) and the workmanship of its petals is obviously characteristic of the traditions of art of this period. The petals show the marginal lines, which are more conspicuously seen in the back view than in front. An interesting detail of these lines is that instead of running all along the margin they stop with an inward curve near the tips of the petals. This *āsana* is apparently moulded as a single piece with the *bhadrāsana* which has the usual mouldings and a pair of spikes, the style of which adds beauty to the bearing of the figure. In view of all these this bronze may be assigned to the beginning of the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 64 The Kāḻiya-kṛishṇa belonging to a gentleman in Madras, may be seen to be another magnificent example of the art of the period. It is not only interesting from the point of view of art but also from the point of view of iconography. This is the first time that a bronze image of an *avatār* of Vishṇu is met with. In the subsequent periods, especially after about 1400 A.D., bronzes representing this *avatār* were produced in large numbers. That this aspect of Kṛishṇa has been a favourite theme with the artists of South India from a very early period is evident from a sculptural representation of it occurring in the Dharmarāja-ratha at Mahābalipuram.[1] That centuries of experience has stood in good stead in making an artistic representation of the theme in bronze is amply borne out by this beautiful piece.

The somewhat grown up child Kṛishṇa is seen dancing, the *catura* mode of dance, with right leg lifted up, on the spread out hoods of the five-headed serpent Kāḻiya. The

[1] C. Sivaramamurti, *Guide to Mahābalipuram*, p. 14.

manner in which the dancer is made to stand effortlessly on the heads of the serpent behoves exceedingly well with the divine nature of the dancer. He wears probably a *keśa-bandha*, a broad *kaṇṭhī*, a tight-fitting *channavīra* with a tassel hanging from its middle, simple armlets, *vāji-bandha* without the projecting piece, *valaya*, shorts with three waist-bands and with the dagger-like piece of cloth hanging from the lowest band and *nūpuras* and *pādasaras*. The face is not only chubby but is full of feeling. The ears do not bear any *kuṇḍalas*. The modelling of the figure as a whole is superb, and its extreme correspondence with that of the bronzes like the Buddha (Fig. 58) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, and the Kīḻaiyūr Subrahmaṇya (Fig. 61) is apparent. The quality of stark realism which is a special characteristic of the bronzes of this period is only too much in evidence in this pretty little item. A very slight faltering is noticed in the moulding of the right leg, which does not however mar the good effect. Quite in keeping with the gentle rhythm of the figure, is the subtle sway of the long tail of the snake, the end of which is held by the left hand of the dancer. The beauty of the slow movement of the dance is magnificently enhanced by the vertically held tail of the serpent.

The hoods of the serpent, in fact, the whole figure, are delineated in a masterly manner. Sheltered under the spread-out hoods, is the bust of Kāḻiya himself with his hands held in *añjali* pose. Though this bust is not given so much attention by the *sthapati* as is bestowed upon even the hoods of the serpent, yet the quality of its modelling is unimpaired. The cleverness of the *sthapati* is apparent in the beautiful manner in which the serpent-tail is pulled out from the human waist with ease and artistic effect. The splendid quality of the figure is revealed also by the way the curved neck part of the serpent is attached to the simple *padmāsana*. This *āsana* is seen to be identical in workmanship with that of the Subrahmaṇya from Kīḻaiyūr (Fig. 61) examined above. Further the *bhadrāsana*, with which this is cast together, is also similar to its prototype except for the presence here of rings on either side. The proportions of the *āsana* are quite in keeping with the slender but beautiful form of the dancing Kṛishṇa, and thus the whole figure is found to be endowed with ethereal splendour.

At Taṇḍantoṭṭam, a village six miles to the east of Kumbhakoṇam were discovered a number of interesting bronzes of which four sets have been published by Dr. C. Minakshi in the *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, Bangalore, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2. She says that "about thirty-five idols were shown in a dark room (of the Śīva temple at the place); a few of them could be identified as those that were dug out" (*ibid.*). Two of the sets of bronzes are very valuable for our study here. They are the "Vīṇādhara and Pārvatī," and Vṛishavāhanamūrti, Pārvatī and Bull. Although several features are common to both the sets yet the former set is slightly earlier than the latter one.

We shall examine them one after the other as they seem to follow closely each other in date.

Before proceeding to describe the so-called Vīṇādhara and Pārvatī group in full, their identification may be dealt with first.

Dr. Minakshi has straightaway identified the figure of Śiva as Vīṇādhara and has in this connection instituted a comparison of this bronze with the Vīṇādhara bronzes in the Madras Museum and from Vaḍaraṅgam. Of the former the one from Belūr (Fig. 56) discussed above may be said to bear some affinity to this bronze. On a close examination one will find some differences in detail between these two pieces. First of all the stance of this bronze is *ālīḍha* whereas the Belūr Vīṇādhara is in *ālīḍha-cum-ābhaṅga* pose. Secondly no serpent is introduced on the person of the latter while its introduction in the present instance seems to be deliberate. Thirdly the position of the left arm in this figure is such as to suggest that it is intended to hold a bow rather than a *vīṇā*. On these grounds, this figure may be taken to represent Tripurāntaka rather than Vīṇādhara and the figure of the goddess as Tripurasundarī. Even though it may be argued that the serpent is a characteristic ornament of Śiva and therefore of Vīṇādhara also, very rarely it is found, in such a prominent manner, associated with Vīṇādhara figures. True, its association with Tripurāntaka figures too is not common. But taking it together with the *ālīḍha* posture, its introduction may be calculated to enhance the fierceness of the theme, whereas no such explanation is possible of this detail in Vīṇādhara figures. Another important point to be noted here is that figures representing Vīṇādhara are not accompanied, by figures of his consort, whereas in the present instance a figure of the goddess Tripurasundarī is also seen.

Fig. 65 Tripurāntaka, about 75 *cm* high, stands in the significant *ālīḍha* posture, which is rarely met with in representations of the theme in bronze. A high *jaṭā-makuṭa*, almost cylindrical in form with rounded top, is seen on the head. It is not as clear as that of the Nallūr Naṭeśa. The crescent moon, *Dātura* flower and the ornament with prongs are seen on it. They are, however, not in high relief. The usual fillet is seen on the forehead. Face is oval and chubby. Eye-brows are ridge-like and eye-lids and eyes are moulded in a naturalistic manner. Nose is high and moulded as if it is of flesh and blood. The lips are sensitive. The expression that results from these features is rather serious. Like the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 44), a simple naturalistic *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the right ear, instead of in the left ear. When discussing this feature above (pp. 68–69) it was stated that in early sculptures of Śiva, the employment of this *kuṇḍala* in the left ear only, had not become standardised. While it may be true even in the present instance, the occurrence of this feature in the figure mentioned above, makes

this inference highly probable that this reversed way of showing the *kuṇḍala* is confined to war-like figures of Śiva, because in them the left side instead of being effeminate becomes manly. If this is accepted as plausible, then this feature may be said to afford an additional proof in support of our identification of this figure as Tripurāntaka. The left ear is empty.

Neck is short and a single *hāra* of *Rudrāksha* berries with a pendant adorns it. *Yajñopavīta* seems to be of pearls. The *udara-bandha* is broad. The torso with the head is bent to the left and the slenderness that characterised the modelling of earlier bronzes is lacking in this and it is somewhat heavy. Nevertheless the lines on either side still retain their purity and rhythmic flow. The chest is slightly narrow. The shoulders are well formed probably to suggest the supreme prowess of the Lord. A braided lock of hair is seen on either shoulder. Behind the right shoulder is seen the raised hood of a serpent and it adds beauty to the figure.

Arms are long and beautifully modelled. The armlets seem to be of simple bands with a knot on the outer side. The ends of the bands are seen prominently on each arm and another band similar to that of the female figure discussed above is also seen. Right fore-arm is held at right angle to the portion above it and this hand is in *kaṭaka* pose. The left arm is lifted up to shoulder level with its fore-arm held up vertically. Its hand is in the posture of holding a long bow. The treatment of this arm is graceful. The bust of this figure viewed separately will be found to be a masterly work from the points of view of proportions, vigour, restrained decoration and a fine sense of plastic modelling.

The legs, like the arms, are tapering from the thighs to the ankles, and their modelling is also fine. But their proportions seem to be not quite compatible with those of the bust. The line from the top of the headdress to the foot appears, therefore, elongated. Although individually each leg displays well the skill of the *sthapati*, in the disposition of both the legs he seems to have faltered a little. The right leg is planted firmly on the pedestal. To show this he has made this leg rather stiff. Furthermore the bend that is seen on the right hip has apparently not been worked successfully. Consequently the lines that frame this leg have suffered slight distortion. The treatment of the left leg is definitely better. The bend at the knee here is natural. But it is apparently much and this emphasis has made the bust to bend forward a little too much. A *pādasara* is seen on each foot.

The loin-cloth is tight-fitting. It is treated in the form of wave-upon-wave pattern met with in the earlier figures. The waist-band and the knot in front are simple. From it hangs down a short end of the loin-cloth. It is attached to the left thigh.

Fig. 66 At the back the height of the headdress is clearly seen, as well as its other details. A large *śiraś-cakra* of lotus petals with their ends unbound by a rim is seen. It is cup-like and has a knob in the centre. A set of four beautiful strands of hair, twisted at their tips and with wide space between them are seen on either side of the back. It is not clear if there is the pendant in the space between the two sets of strands, which is seen in the Śiva figures discussed above. But it is most probably present here. The treatment of the braided locks is especially noteworthy. To the set of locks on the right side is added the serpent. Its wavy line and raised hood enhance the beauty of this side. The other details such as the sacred thread, the stomach-band the waist-band are also seen clearly. The treatment of the projecting end of the loin-cloth in the middle of the waist is noteworthy and it is not prominent as in some of the bronzes noticed above.

The rounded character of the modelling is easily recognised from this side, especially from the buttocks, legs and the arms. Except for the slightly excessive bend of the figure to its left side, on the whole, its stance as seen from this side, is full of life, brought about by the rhythmic flow of lines.

The *padmāsana* on which this figure stands is interesting, in that it is square in shape instead of circular or oval. That it is worked like a double-lotus is clear, which shows the unmistakable conventionalisation of this *motif* by this time. As has been said above, the *padmāsana* instead of being fixed to the *bhadrāsana,* is separate and the latter *āsana,* on which it should have been placed, is missing.

The Tripurasundarī (about 56 *cm* high) as required by the *Śilpa* texts, is shorter than the Tripurāntaka. The apex of its *makuṭa* reaches only upto the level of the shoulder of the latter. This does not seem to have been so rigorously followed during earlier periods as far instance the Umā of the Somāskanda group from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 36) is not much shorter than the Śiva. Strict adherence to the rules of the texts seems therefore to have come into vogue only from about the time of this group of bronzes. It is well-known that in the subsequent periods no *sthapati* was allowed to swerve, even slightly from this practice. The figure stands in a slight *bhaṅga* leaning to the left side.

A *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of a peculiar form is seen on the head. It is high and conical. There are only three *karaṇḍas* at the top, occupying one third of the total height of the *makuṭa*. The lower part seems to be plain. Such a *makuṭa* has not been met with in

any other bronze.[1] Its style is obviously less evolved than that of the *makuṭas* of the *devīs* of Viṣṇu No. 1 of the *Catalogue*, but more evolved than that of the Pārvatī (?) discussed above. Though tall, the circumference of its brim being less than that of the head, the *makuṭa* does not fit the head properly. Besides these peculiarities, it being associated with Pārvatī whose figures usually show a *jaṭā-makuṭa* or *keśa-bandha*, this *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* becomes important for a comparative study of Pārvatī figures. The face in oval and it is somewhat projecting out. This, coupled with the narrow forehead, is so different from the treatment of the face of Tripurāntaka that one is likely to suspect if this was by the same *sthapati* who did the latter or not. But, except for this difference, there is apparently perfect agreement in the rendering of the other details of these two figures, which proves the fact that both of them were made by one and the same *sthapati*. The expression on the face is slightly dazed. If so, it is quite in keeping with the awe-inspiring situation namely the destruction of the demons of the three cities by Tripurāntaka which she witnessed. *Makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears.

Neck is short and a broad *kaṇṭhī* adorns it. A *yajñopavīta* with a single strand is seen passing between the full, almost addorsed and beautifully modelled, breasts. The naval portion is also fine but the waist is a bit heavier than that of the Pārvatī (?) discussed (Fig. 59) above. Shoulders of this figure too is powerful like those of Tripurāntaka. A lock of hair decorated with flowers falls gracefully on each shoulder. A simple thick *valaya* with a knot on the outer side is seen on each upper arm. Below this is seen an elbow-ornament which is also a simple band as seen in the previous Pārvatī (?) figure. But a special feature of the ornament of this figure is that it has a small projection on the outer side, making it a *vājī-bandha*, which is seen for the first time here and which becomes a characteristic feature of a majority of figures belonging to the periods immediately following the one to which this figure is assigned. It is seen only in some of the figures belonging to still later periods. Right hand is in *kaṭaka* and the left is in *lola* poses. A set of three *valayas* is seen on each wrist, and rings adorn the fingers. The arms are also modelled thick, but the fingers are delicate and the gestures beautiful. The left arm appears to be long, reaching upto the knees, which is a characteristic of early sculptures.

[1] The headdress of Pārvatī illustrated on Plate 49 in the *Art of India and Pakistan*, may at first sight seem to be similar to this. But its remoteness to the *makuṭa* of the bronze under discussion will be apparent on a closer examination. While in the present instance the *karaṇḍas* start from above half the length of the *makuṭa*, in the Pārvatī dealt with in the above book the entire *makuṭa* is of *karaṇḍas*. Interestingly the *makuṭa* of Sītā illustrated on Plate 57 (Fig. 327) of the same book, and dated to 17th-18th century A.D., is of this type which is however considerably evolved. On this ground and on account of the evolved manner of treatment of the eyes, eyebrows, lips, bangles, fingers and lower garment, the Pārvatī illustrated in the book may have to be assigned to a much later date than the 10th century A.D.

The hips are rather heavy, and the legs thick and fleshy. Nevertheless there is a subtle suggestion of beautiful rhythm in their lines. Unlike the Tripurāntaka, the postures of the legs are deftly handled, the erect right leg being quite in keeping with the gently bending and slightly advancing left leg. The knee-caps are not prominent. A *pādasara* is seen on each foot. The garment which closely clings to the legs, reaches to the ankles and it is done in the characteristic wave-over-wave pattern. But the modelled lines of the waves do not show themselves so much as in some of the bronzes to be noticed below. There are four bands of sashes on the waist with a simple knot in front but with no loops. Bows or hanging ends of garment are not seen on the sides because they are rarely met with in female figures. For instance, these are absent from the Pārvatī (?) discussed above and also in several bronzes representing goddesses and women to be discussed below. An end of the garment in seen attached to the right leg. It reaches to the ankle, whereas in the previous Pārvatī (?), it stopped half way.

Examination of the back of the figure shows the four *karaṇḍas* forming the topmost part of the *makuṭa* distinctly. The *śiraś-cakra* unlike that of Tripurāntaka is like a wheel with a rim. The spokes are thick and so close to each other that there is only a small space between them. The central knob is thick and a tassel hangs from it. Below this are seen the braided locks with twisted ends arranged closely. It must be mentioned here that an ornament enclosing these strands of hair is seen. Such an ornament is conspicuously seen in several figures of *devīs* of Vishṇu (Fig. 124) of later periods. The bands of the girdle are distinct. The end of the garment tucked up in the waist is comparatively small. The rounded features of the figure are distinctly seen from this side.

The figure stands on a *padmāsana* which is circular in shape. The petals of the lotus both in this figure and in the Tripurāntaka are much evolved. No longer are they treated each in a distinct manner. Each petal coalesces with the other with the result only a jumble of them is seen. The line of demarcation between the upper and the lower parts is however very clear.

As a group, these two figures are seen to go together well. The *ati-bhaṅga* of Tripurāntaka is beautifully balanced by the almost erect figure of Tripurasundarī which has its place only on the left side of Tripurāntaka. Both the figures bend to the left. Yet there does not seem to be any incongruity in this, because this is countered by the slightly lifted up right arms of both of them, and the left arm of Tripurāntaka lifted high up. The modelling of both the figures is distinctly more advanced than that of the figures noticed up till now. A definite swing towards heaviness is perceptible. Nevertheless this group is a fine one. From the workmanship these bronzes may be dated to about the same period as the above discussed bronzes, *i.e.*, the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

The other group of bronzes representing Vṛishavāhanamūrti from the same place, namely, Taṇḍantoṭṭam, show features which are slightly more advanced than those of the previous group. But as will be shown below, these bronzes, from every point of view, may have to be considered as amongst the most magnificent specimens of bronzes of South India. Three figures form the group. They are Śiva, Pārvatī and a bull, all standing. The posture of Śiva is such as to make him stand leaning against the bull to his left. Such representations are usually called as either Vṛishavāhanamūrti or Vṛishabhārūḍhamūrti [1] or Vṛishabhāntikamūrti. The meaning of the former two words, more particularly the second, is 'Śiva riding on the bull', and that of the last is 'Śiva beside bull'. It is, therefore, more appropriate to call this by the term Vṛishabhāntikamūrti than by any of the other two. But the term Vṛishabhavāhana-deva is mentioned in an inscription of Rājarāja I's time [2], which is adopted here.

Śiva as Vrishabhavāhana, ht. about 105 *cm*, has only two arms like the one Fig. 67
from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 128) to be noticed below, as well as other bronzes representing the theme, of later periods also. It seems, therefore, to be a rule to show Śiva in this aspect as two-armed except in rare instances. The figure stands on a *padmāsana* in the beautiful *ābhaṅga* pose. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is not high but it is treated in a manner which is at once beautiful and delicate. The braided locks and the other details are in high relief. On top is the usual flower which is shown here very prominently. It may be said that this has become a crowning piece, in the real sense of the term, because its depiction is really in the nature of enhancing the glory of the figure. The *Dātura* flower, serpents and the crescent moon are all seen clearly. As usual the *keyūra*-like ornament adorns the central part of the *makuṭa*. A finely worked broad *paṭṭa* is seen above the forehead. On either side of the *makuṭa* is a series of ends of *jaṭās* projecting slightly out. Though the ends of locks of this type seen in the Naṭeśa from Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi (Fig. 54) are larger and so may, on that account, be considered to indicate a late date for that bronze, yet their style being archaic, compared to that of the *jaṭā*–ends of the Śiva in question which is highly refined, that Naṭeśa is given an earlier date than this bronze.

The face has the form of a beautiful ovoid and the features are delineated in a manner which is almost unsurpassed for their beauty except of course a few bronzes, such as the Naṭeśa (Fig. 93) from Śivapuram, which have comparable features. The forehead is narrow and there is the third eye. The eyebrows are naturalistic, as also the eye-lids, nose, lips, chin and cheeks. The ears are short but are full of feeling; and

[1] T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol, II, Pt. I, p. 352.
[2] *A.R E.* for 1918, No. 456 from the Śiva temple at Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District.

they are empty. The beautiful smile that beams through the highly sensitive lips suggests supreme bliss.

The neck is neither too high nor too short. A pair of *kaṇṭhīs* adorn it. Of these the lower one is broader. *Yajñopavīta* is single-stranded and short. It is shown as taking a circuit round the navel, which is a novel feature. The *udara-bandha* is simple but broad. The torso, like that of the Tripurāntaka discussed above shows heavy modelling but nevertheless its proportions are kept within reasonable bounds so as to make it fit exquisitely well with the modelling of the whole figure. The chest is very broad with the result, the lines of the sides are bent a little and therefore appear to be wide-mouthed as it were. Further development of this feature is best illustrated by the Rāma (Fig. 96) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr. While in the Rāma this feature seems to be slightly stiff, here its treatment is natural and hence beautiful. Shoulders are strong and powerful. On the left shoulder is seen a graceful strand of hair. On the right one is the pendent ornament which is prominent. Arms are rather heavily moulded, the slimness that characterised the figures like Trivikrama (Fig. 53) and the Buddha (Fig. 58) definitely seems to have become a tradition of the past by now. In this figure, however, this new development has not produced any bad effect, because the whole figure is quite proportionate. On each arm is seen a *nāga-valaya* of the simplest type. It is wound round only once, both the head and tail of the *nāga* being seen in front. The band on the elbow, called *vāji-bandha* is very interesting in this figure. It seems to be a simple band of cloth with a knot on the outer side, from which project out prominently its ends. It is not seen in this form in the figures noticed above except the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 65). A significant point to be noted in the depiction of this detail is as follows: In the earliest bronzes discussed above, it is not only very prominent but is the only ornament on the arm. But in the bronzes of the subsequent period a *keyūra* or *nāga-valaya* begins to take its place. Still later, besides the armlet, a small band on the elbow was also depicted, *e.g.*, Trivikrama from Siṅgānallūr, Naṭeśa from Nallūr and Vīṇādhara from Belūr; but its importance was definitely secondary to that of the armlet. Here in the present instance this elbow ornament is given prominence equal to that of the armlet shown above it. As will be seen below, for some time hereafterwards, this ornament retains its prominence. On the wrists are serpents serving as bangles. The right arm is held in a graceful posture hanging low with a slight bend at the elbow and its hand is in *kaṭaka* pose. The left arm is held at an angle of about 45° to the shoulder with its fore-arm bent so as to suggest that the figure is supporting itself by placing this hand on the back of the bull. To emphasise this posture, the trunk of the figure is also slightly bent to left. The treatment of the fingers which are adorned with rings is as usual delicate and tender.

The hips and the legs are modelled perfectly well, and not even a trace of the deficiencies met with in the Tripurāntaka discussed above is evident. The line running from the arm-pit down, does not halt anywhere till it reaches the toes; besides, it flows in a manner which is at once smooth and graceful. The same is the case with the left leg too. Here the bend at the knee adds charm to the beautiful posture of the bronze. The knee-caps are seen clearly and *pādasaras* adorn the feet.

The loin-cloth is in the characteristic wave form, each wave being distinctly shown. Its one end is seen in a short triangular form between the legs. Three bands are seen on the waist with a beautiful *simha-mukha* knot in front.

At the back the beauty of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* is seen at its best; the projecting ends of *jaṭās*, on either side, are done in a praiseworthy manner. The *paṭṭa* seen in front, is depicted pronouncedly. The treatment of the braided locks that hang down, is admirable. On each side is seen a set of five strands with gracefully twisted ends. In the space between the two sets is seen the usual pipal-leaf-like pendent ornament, which is here very broad and prominent. But it does not hang lower than the *jaṭās* whereas in some of the figures, noticed above, it hangs down beyond the ends of the *jaṭās*. Among the other details, specially noteworthy are the loin-cloth, its end tucked up in the middle of the waist and the elbow ornament. No *śiraś-cakra* is present. As it is not also present in the *devī* figure, accompanying this, probably it was not shown in either of them. Fig. 68

Above all, the perfection of modelling, in the round, of this figure is noticeable to great advantage from this side. The treatment of the legs, buttocks and the torso, as seen from here, proves beyond doubt the fact that this is a gem of a bronze and that the *sthapati* who created this was of no mean ability. Indeed he should have been a great *sādhaka*, to attain to such mastery in his profession, as would be able not only to conceive grand themes like this but also to execute them so perfectly.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands is also exquisitely worked. But the prominence given to the tips of the petals and the narrowing of the space between two of them are traits characteristic of advanced technique.

Pārvatī, ht. about 85 *cm*, also stands on a *padmāsana* of similar workmanship, in a *bhaṅga* which is neither *ābhaṅga*, as the bend is more than that characterises this posture, nor *tribhaṅga* because the three bends of this posture have not yet been emphasised so much as is usually associated with such figures. Whatever may be the nature of the *bhaṅga*, its gracefulness and rhythm are apparent. An important feature of this figure is that it is bent to the left with the left hand in *kaṭaka* pose and that its position, instead of on the left of Śiva, is on his right. The significance Fig. 69

of this change of position is not known, especially when we know that in all the examples of Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti that we know of, Pārvatī as a rule, stands to the left of Śiva. Unlike the Tripurasundarī figure which is much shorter than the Tripurāntaka, here Pārvatī is only slightly shorter, its *makuṭa* reaching to about the level of the eyes of Śiva. So the observations made there regarding *Āgamic* injunctions do not seem to have been strictly adhered to in this instance. This aspect has, on the other hand, made the group perfect from the point of view of composition too.

This Pārvatī figure has a *jaṭā-makuṭa* or *keśa-bandha* which is similar in style to that of Śiva himself. Here, however, the projecting ends of *jaṭās* and the emblems of Śiva are not present. The floral decorations on this *makuṭa* are tastefully represented. The *paṭṭa* above the forehead is also beautifully depicted. Though there is not so much difference in the treatment of the faces of these two figures as is found between the two figures discussed above, namely Tripurāntaka and Tripurasundarī, some difference does exist, the reason for which is not known. While the face of Śiva is nearly round, it is elongate in this Pārvatī; and the manner in which the eyes are depicted here is slightly different from that of the eyes of Śiva. In spite of these differences, the other features, particularly modelling, of these figures proclaim that they were made by one and the same *sthapati*. The expression on the face is rather serious. The ears are empty in this figure also.

Two beautiful *kaṇṭhīs* are seen on the neck; the upper one is broad and the lower one is slender. A *channavīra* is seen on the trunk; but no sacred thread is present. The curves of this cross-band are rendered beautifully. The treatment of the bust is similar to that of the bust of Śiva. The breasts are full and highly sensuously modelled. The postures of the arms are exceedingly well executed. The right arm is in *lola* pose and it seems to reach to the knee. Though the rendering of this pose may seem to be somewhat stiff the wonderful manner in which the hand and its fingers are rendered, removes at once the illusion, and makes it throb with life. Moreover the lines of the arm are seen to vibrate with exquisite rhythm. The left hand is in *kaṭaka* pose. On the arms are seen *keyūras* with the prongs projecting up from them. The *vāji-bandhas* of this figure, which are very conspicuous, form its most interesting detail. The band with a simple knot on the outerside, seen on the elbow of Śiva now shows a small fan-like projection. An earliest example of this detail in a female figure was seen in the Pārvatī (?) from Washington (Fig. 59), where it is only a double-course band without any projection. Something like a projection was seen in the Tripurasundarī examined above. Its full development is, therefore, met with in this figure. Besides the projection, the inclined manner of showing the band makes the ornament lovely. On the wrists is a series of thin *valayas*, also shown in a slightly inclined position which suggests that the figure is in the attitude of slow motion. Rings adorn the fingers.

The rendering of the part below the waist is akin in all respects to the rendering of the same part of Śiva, except for the difference in the garments worn by them. Here the garment is a *sāri* whereas in Śiva it is a loin-cloth. The depiction of the folds in the form of wavy lines is again an exquisite feature of this figure also, in which respect it has few equals. One end of the garment is tucked beautifully on the right side and it hangs down on the thigh with graceful folds at its tip. Three bands are seen on the waist of which the uppermost seems to be a gem-set girdle (*ratna-mekhalā*). The other two are simpler but the central one is broad and has a small knot in front. A very interesting detail met with here is the tassel with heart-like pendant hanging on the right thigh. Probably a similar one is seen on the left thigh too. This particular decoration is extremely beautifully depicted in the Pārvatī (Fig. 76) now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, discussed below. Neither loops in front nor bow decorations on either side are seen here. While the other end of the *antarīya* (lower garment) of the Tripurasundarī figure is seen attached to the right leg here it is attached to the left leg. Further it is broader and more prominent here than in the other figure. It is seen in this fashion for the first time only here. Its history is interesting and it will be known gradually as we go on examining more and more examples of bronzes. A thick broad and *kiṅkiṇī*–attached *pādasara* is seen on each foot.

The postures of the legs like those of the arms, are delineated with consummate skill and they appear to be life-like. Introduced to relieve the monotony and rigidity that are inherent in a sculpture with its conspicuous frontality, the *bhaṅgas* of the legs have enhanced the beauty of the figure which has thus become undoubtedly another gem of a bronze.

On the other side the details from head to foot are as usual clear-cut. Fig. 70
The splendid manner in which the hair is arranged is easily seen from this side. The flowers and bands that decorate the *keśa-bandha* are charming. More interesting and beautiful is the treatment of the braided locks of hair that hang down on the back. The twisted ends of each strand is of fine workmanship. Instead of showing only a few long strands with much space between them, here also, as is usual with images of *devīs* a number of them are shown close to each other. But the pattern which the *sthapati* has made out of these locks of hair is exceedingly well conceived and beautifully executed. In the case of the Tripurasundarī figure, an ornament enclosing these strands of hair was seen. But it is absent here. It, therefore, seems that at the time when these were made, the practice of introducing this ornament did not become conventionalised but was only optional. But from a slightly later period this becomes more or less an invariable feature of almost all the bronzes.

At the middle of the back side is seen a simple clasp securing firmly the four ends of the *channavīra*. This clasp becomes ornate in later bronzes as will be seen below *e.g.*, the Sītā from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 96). Other details of interest on this side are the knot of the *keyūra* which is something similar to the knot of the elbow-band of Śiva himself and to that of the *keyūra* of Mātaṅgī (Fig. 149) to be discussed below; the prominent tucked-up end of the garment at the middle of the waist, the bands of the girdle, the graceful posture and the exquisite modelling of the limbs, now unmistakably in the round all these details show clearly that this is one of the very fine examples of the art. It may be mentioned here that the Pārvatī (Fig. 76) to be discussed below seems, to be more or less a replica of this figure. As has been said above, when the figures of Śiva and Pārvatī, each a perfect specimen of its kind, form a group, the glory of the composition may as well be imagined. The illustrations do not at all do justice to the magnificence of the originals.

The bull (Fig. 67), height about 70 *cm*, the vehicle of Śiva, seen beside him is another masterpiece which also adds considerably to the excellence of the group. It is short compared to Śiva and possesses only short horns. But its modelling is naturalistic which makes it throb with life. Its uplifted head with outstretched ears, as if listening intently to some sound, the two rows of bells and a chain, worked in a tasteful manner seen on the neck, the beautiful hump, the slender but powerful torso and the strong and proportionate legs, each pair of which stands on an oval *padmāsana*, are all executed without the slightest degree of hesitation or wavering and with a supreme confidence by the *sthapati*. On account of this it may be taken to be one of the very few masterpieces of animal studies in bronze. Interestingly the bull is cast hollow while the other figures are cast solid. In fact, animal figures are generally cast hollow.

Regarding the date of the above group of bronzes Dr. Minakshi says: "From a general study of the Taṇḍantoṭṭam images in relation to published Coḷa images, it may be tentatively maintained that the unearthed images described above belong to the early Coḷa period rather than to the time of Pallavamalla." This statement is cautious indeed, but it is also vague because the duration of the early Choḷa period is given differently by different historians. The well-known classification of the Choḷa rule into two broad divisions, namely early and later, with the dates 850–1100 A.D., and 1100–1350 A.D., respectively, is the one given by Professor Dubreuil. It will thus be found that bronzes said to belong to one of these two divisions, may be placed anywhere within the 250-year period. Though this was perhaps permissible about twenty-five years ago when knowledge about the bronzes was very much circumscribed, at present sufficient data are available to place the bronzes more or less definitely in the period of one or the other of the important monarchs of the Choḷa or other royal dynasties. We have already assigned the

Tripurāntaka and his consort to the second quarter of the 10th century. This Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti group may also be said to belong to the same period.

While the above mentioned bronzes were recently photographed, a few more[1] bronzes of great beauty were discovered at Taṇḍantoṭṭam. These are some of the thirty and odd bronzes said, by Dr. C. Minakshi, to have been discovered at the place. Of these newly discovered ones, the following two bronzes are equally, if not more, interesting than the bronzes discribed above.

The Naṭeśa is as much interesting as the above mentioned pieces. In fact being a product of the school under discussion, it possesses all the qualities of a best example of the art of the period and it being a representation of Śiva's cosmic activity, its workmanship is splendid and it may, therefore, be called easily an outstanding specimen of the art of bronzes. That its modelling and finish are exactly similar to the above items is apparent. Further, that its position is prior to the Okkūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 88) is also easily known not only from the disposition of the limbs but also from the ornaments and pedestal. Fig. 71

The whirling locks are not present here and the *jaṭās* are arranged in a *makuṭa* form with the crescent moon on the right side near the top, and the *Dātura* flower at the bottom of left side. A remarkable feature of the *makuṭa* is the string of four or five flowers hanging on the right side, which is a unique detail not met with in any other Naṭeśa bronze. Besides this, the *paṭṭa* seems to go round the head and it can be seen from the beautiful loop depicted parallel to the right ear. The face is round and chubby and its features are bold. The expression suggests amazement. The ornaments include two beaded *hāras*, a smoothly flowing thick *yajñopavīta*, an *udara-bandha* of stiff *paṭṭa*, *nāga-valaya* type of armlets with its head worked in an ornate manner, simple bangles on the wrists, rings in the fingers and *pādasaras* with *kiṅkiṇīs*. The depiction of the serpent on the lower right fore-arm is simply charming. Similar is the case with the piece of cloth seen on the left shoulder. On the right shoulder is the characteristic pendant which is not clearly seen in the picture. The *ḍamaru* held in the upper right hand is noteworthy for its realistic workmanship. The flame in the upper left hand is not only simple and beautiful but also gives a clue to the place of the bronze before the Okkūr Naṭeśa. The flame has only three tongues and it is kept in a small receptacle. Further the charming manner in which it is held is noteworthy. In fact, the disposition of the two uplifted upper arms with their forearms bent at right angles seems to make the figure soar high in the ethereal regions. The arm in the *gaja-hasta* pose is yet low and the *sthapati* who made this piece was therefore very near the perfect form which has

[1] I am indebted to Mr. R. Nagaswamy, the present Curator for Art and Archæology of the Madras Museum for the discovery of these new bronzes as well as for the photographs of all the bronzes from the place.

been achieved only at a slightly later period as exemplified by the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram (Fig. 93) to be discussed below. These remarks are applicable to the pose of the left leg also. The Apasmāra Purusha is insignificant, but the pedestal which is of the *bhadrāsana* type is simple possessing the usual pair or spikes. Unfortunately the *tiruvāśi* or *prabhāvaḷi* is not preserved.

The back view shows the petalled *śiraś-cakra* with a tassel hanging from its central knob. Interestingly, twisted strands of hair gradually fall on the back. Owing to the presence of the hesitation in depicting the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* mode properly, the majesty of the pose associated with it is slightly impaired and it is seen from the treatment of the lines of the left side as well as by the sharp angle that the right thigh makes at the hip. Despite this very insignificant imperfection, this piece deserves all that has been said above about its qualities.

Fig. 72 The other bronze represents Subrahmaṇya as Brahmaśāstā. In fact iconographically it is a significant specimen and coming as it does from the heart of the Choḷa country, it testifies to the importance that the Subrahmaṇya worship had in South India in those early times. Especially noteworthy is the aspect represented here, and the remarks relating to that aspect made about the Subrahmaṇya (Fig. 61) from Kīḻaiyūr are applicable here also. The figure is in erect posture and is only single-faced and four-armed with the upper right and left hands holding his characteristic weapons, *śakti* and *vajra* respectively. The shape of the *vajra* of this bronze is noteworthy. Unlike the shape of the weapon seen in the Kīḻaiyūr Subrahmaṇya (Fig. 61), here it has a trident at each end. It may be mentioned here the fact that during this period and the one immediately following this, Subrahmaṇya images were made with only this type of *vajra*.[1] The lower right and left hands are in *abhaya* and *kaṭi-hasta* poses. The *makuṭa* does not seem to be of *karaṇḍas* and the thick garland-like decoration going round the head is noteworthy. Prominent *patra-kuṇḍalas* adorn the ears. A thick *hāra* is seen on the neck, and below it is the ring-like *vaikaksha*, two strands of which go one on each side while the third simply hangs in the middle. There is the interesting shoulder ornament on the right side only. This and the armlets and wristlets are similar to those of the other images of this group. The decorative details on the waist include the clasp, without *simha-mukha* design, of the somewhat deeply curving median loop of the sash, the ornate bows and hanging ends of cloth with beautifully frilled tips on the side,
Fig. 73 and *pādasaras*. The interesting details seen at the back are the *śiraś-cakra*, the beautiful array of twisted strands of hair seen over the back of the neck and the broad band consisting of several beaded strings hanging from the middle of the strands

[1] For two figures of this type belonging to early Choḷa times, see Figs. 6 and 8 of Pl. XXVIII in *Lalit Kalā* No. 5.

of hair. The pedestal consists of *padmāsana* and *bhadrāsana*, both moulded together. The latter is exceedingly simple but beautiful, while the workmanship of the *padmāsana* is superb. Thus this bronze is quite an outstanding example of the art of the period. In fact the foregoing discussion of the items from Taṇḍantoṭṭam reveals the importance of the hoard and its significance for a study of the art in South India.

The figure of standing Śiva representing Kirātamūrti from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District,[1] now in the Tanjore Art Gallery may be taken up next for examination. Fig. 74

The figure, interestingly, stands gracefully in a slight *tribhaṅga*. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is short and its details including the ornament are shown in high relief. It is these features that make this figure belong to the school of Parāntaka I. The broad eyes, short nose, the thick but sensitive lips, the short ears and the nearly square shape of the face that characterise this figure are continued from now on as a type. A number of bronzes with this facial type will be dealt with below. This bronze may, therefore, be taken to be one of the first examples illustrating this new development.

In the left ear is a long thin *patra-kuṇḍala*. The neck is short. A broad gem-set *kaṇṭhī* is seen on it. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded and shows the double-bell clasp, from which hangs a looped end of the thread, on the left chest. Each strand shows grooves incised on it. The *udara-bandha* is broad. The treatment of the torso is exquisite. It is akin to the torso of the Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti discussed above, but here the line on the right side is more deeply bent at the place of stomach, in order to emphasise the *bhaṅga* of the figure to the left. On each shoulder is seen a twisted strand of hair of simple workmanship. On the right shoulder, however, there is the pendant usually met with in the Śiva figures discussed above. It is however neither broad nor shows tassels flanking it. But that it is at a developed stage is seen from the refrined treatment of the pipal-leaf pendant as well as of the ribbon to which it is attached. The modelling of the shoulders is powerful.

The four arms are obviously short and stout. This is conspicuously seen in the part above the elbow. The charm that is seen in the slender limbs of earlier figures seems gradually to disappear although in this instance it is preserved to some extent. This is probably due to the graceful gestures of the hands and the fine modelling of the fingers. The upper arms start from the elbow, almost at right angles to the lower arms. The armlet is of the type which we have called as *nāga-valaya* of which the band part as well as the head is well developed. Three thick bangles adorn the wrists. A ring is

[1] O.C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. XIV; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Viśvakarma*, ii, Fig. 28.

worn on each finger. The emblems most probably *paraśu* and deer are missing from the upper hands while both the lower hands are in *kaṭaka* pose in the attitude of holding something.

The hips and legs are as beautiful as the upper part and are slightly more developed than those of Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti from Taṇḍantoṭṭam. The knee-caps are emphasised. Nevertheless, the postures of the legs are done in an excellent manner. The bend of the left leg, which is the result of the bend of the torso to the left, is executed with great skill and this is responsible for the splendid poise of the figure. The loin-cloth is treated in the wavy manner but the space between two waves is much less here, and its end that hangs between the legs is noteworthy because it does not show the dagger-like shape. The refinement of the *motif* on the clasp of the waist-band is significant especially from the minute workmanship of the threads that spring from its top. It may be noted that though it looks like a *simha-mukha* it is not really worked like that. The *uttarīya* seems wound only once here; and there is the broad gem-set girdle above it. Above all these, a new ornament is seen in this figure. It is the long pendant hanging from the right thigh. A more prominent ornament of this type has been noticed in the Pārvatī of Vṛishabhavāhana group from Taṇḍantoṭṭam, and this is seen in a still more prominent manner in the Pārvatī (Fig. 76) belonging to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and in the Pārvatī (Fig. 80) from Koḍumuḍi to be discussed below. A thick anklet is seen on each foot and a ring round each big toe.

Fig. 75 At the back side the *jaṭā-makuṭa* is not particularly interesting, except for the developed *keyūra*-like ornaments on either side seen on the part above the ears. *Śiraś-cakra* was perhaps not introduced in this figure just as in the case of the Vṛishabhavāhana from Taṇḍantoṭṭam. The *jaṭās* that hang on the back are treated in a splendid manner. Here also there are two series of five *jaṭās* each, with wide space in between. The ends of the *jaṭās* are charmingly twisted. In the central space is seen prominently the pendant which is very ornate. This is evident from the comparatively high relief and large size of the pipal-leaf-like part of it. As usual the other details are clearly seen. But the depiction of the *yajñopavīta* is noteworthy. Of the three strands, the middle one is broad. The other two, which are slender, are shown distinctly separate from the middle one and are made to join the knot on the left chest independently. Interestingly the longest of the strands is seen to emerge almost in a vertical position from above the left buttock, and shown to come close to the middle strand higher up than the centre of the back. This feature seems to be similar to that found in some of the Vishṇu figures belonging to the late Pallava period examined above. As usual, the beauty of the stance and the modelling are seen to great advantage from this side.

The pedestal consists only of a *bhadrāsana* which is rectangular possessing mouldings of the type characteristic of the traditions of the period as exemplified by the pedestals of the Tiruppurambiyam Vīṇādhara (Fig. 62) etc. The absence of the *padmāsana* is rather inexplicable. The spikes are broken but their lower parts are seen attached to the *āsana*. On these grounds, this figure may be assigned to about the last years of the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

It was identified as Gaṅgādhara by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy and Mr. O. C. Gangoly. Professor T. B. Nayar[1] identified it as Vīṇādhara Dakshiṇāmūrti. But Mr. T. N. Ramachandran's acceptance of its identification as Kirātamūrti by Mr. H. Krishna Sastri is more plausible. The date assigned to it by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran[2] requires revision.

This beautiful bronze is associated with a bronze representing goddess Pārvatī. Though this Pārvatī is no doubt a good specimen, yet its details are so developed that it has to be assigned to a later period. Its proportions are also not in keeping with those of the Kirātamūrti. Hence its association with the latter is a mistake in which case it may have belonged to a different group.

The figure of Pārvatī[3] now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York shows features some of which are similar to those of the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 74) from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi and some others to those of the Vishṇu (Fig. 78) from Koḍumuḍi to be discussed below. There are yet some early features like the hair-dressing seen at the back which make the attribution of the figure specifically to this period, difficult. Nevertheless the following details of the figure help us to place the bronze immediately after the above figure and its date may therefore be about the middle of the 10th century A.D., not 900 A.D. as given by Mr. Aschwin Lippe in the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, for February 1960. Fig. 76

The figure stands in *tribhaṅga* pose which is definitely a step more advanced than the poses of Pārvatī (Fig. 59) in the Washington Freer Art Gallery and Pārvatī (Fig. 69) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam. The affinity of this figure in this respect to the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 74) from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi will be found to be remarkable. Here, however, the theme being a goddess the *bhaṅga* has added considerably to the charm and beauty of the bronze. The other apparent but important feature which gives an idea about its posteriority to the Washington Pārvatī is its modelling. While the latter bronze is of slender frame,

[1] *Three South Indian Metal Images - A study.* Journal of the Annamalai University, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 31.

[2] *Kirātārjunīyam or Arjuna's Penance in Indian Art*, pp. 97-100. Mr. Ramachandran's discussion of the identification of the bronze is indeed brilliant.

[3] A fine reproduction of both the front and back views of this marvellous bronze adorns the cover page of February, 1960 issue of the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York. Mr. Aschwin Lippe makes a brief mention about this piece on p. 190 of the Bulletin.

this one is of heavy build. As has been said above, from about the middle of the 10th century, the technique of heavy modelling of bronzes seems to have begun to be widely practised by the *sthapatis* of the Choḷa country. The bronze under study may be said to be one of the masterpieces of this technique.

The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of the figure is at once simple and beautiful. It shows on all the sides except the back, the pronged ornament; while the back is decorated with a triple-banded tassel. The face is round and chubby. Its features are extremely life-like including the expression which suggests seriousness. *Patra-kuṇḍalas* are seen on the ears. The neck is short and a broad ornate *kaṇṭhī* bounded by a ring is seen on the neck. A twisted strand of hair is seen gracing each shoulder. A *yajñopavīta* of pearls, swaying in a gentle but beautiful manner, is seen. That the modelling of the torso is heavy is apparent. In spite of this, its rounded features and smoothly curving lines make it charming. But the sharp curve of the line of the left side above the stomach is indicative of the tradition of this period, a beginning of which has already been met with in the Tiruveḷvikkuḍi Kirātamūrti. The high, full and round breasts, treated with skill and understanding add greatly to the marvellous character of the bronze. The part of the stomach and the navel too are rendered in a masterly manner. The arms are long but highly proportionate. The manner in which they are treated strongly reminds one of the arms of the Washington Pārvatī (Fig. 59). The similarity between the left arms of these two bronzes is especially marked as can be seen from the inward bend of the forearm. A three-pronged *keyūra*, with small festoons and tassels hanging from it, is seen on each arm, while a set of three stiff bangles adorns each wrist. The right hand is in *kaṭaka* pose while the left one is in *lola* pose. The workmanship of this part is such that even when it is viewed separately its grandeur remains unimpaired.

The part below the waist is equally beautifully moulded. The agreement between the proportions of one part to those of the other is so perfect and natural as to make the bronze one of the splendid productions of the age. In addition to this, the gentle *bhaṅga* and the restrained but highly refined embellishments greatly enhance the charm of the bronze. The garment is worked in the characteristic wave-over-wave pattern, the space in between two waves being probably decorated with flower designs. The realistic delineation of this detail is apparent in the manner in which the flow of the end of the garment seen between the legs is depicted as well as by the beautiful frills of the other end tucked up on the left side. The waist-band seems to be in three strands. The end of one of them hangs on the left thigh. The knot in front of these bands is much similar to the knot seen in the Kirātamūrti from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, in both of which there is only a semblance of a *simha-mukha*, but not a real *motif* of that kind. The most interesting decoration seen on this side is the pipal-leaf-like pendant at the end of a long chain with

a beautifully swaying tassel on either side, hanging from the waist-band on each thigh. It may be mentioned here that this is a unique decoration the like of which is hardly met with in any other bronze. Though the Pārvatī of the Vṛishabhavāhana group (Fig. 69) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam also has an ornament like this, it is not so beautiful as this.

The masses of the legs are also treated with consummate skill and the lines that enclose them are not only flawless but also beautifully flowing. That the *sthapati* was a *rasika* of a high order is apparent in the manner in which the part comprising the hip and the thighs is treated with an emphasis on the hip without affecting the excellent poise of the stance. A *pādasara* is seen on each foot. Such is the glory of the front view of the bronze.

But the beauty of the back view is even more splendid; the surpassingly fresh manner in which the hair is dressed and arranged, is alone sufficient to make the bronze a marvel. The *makuṭa* is tapering beautifully and the *śiraś-cakra* is of the simple blossomed flower type. Of the hair a part is plaited and shown curled up at the back of the neck while the other part falls on the back in twisted and looped strands of which some bear flower designs at their tips. The usual pendant is seen prominently here. Among the other details of this side, mention may be made of the simple *yajñopavīta*, tucked-up end of cloth on the waist and the simple knots of the armlets. The modelling of the buttocks and legs, above all, is superb and the beautiful flow of the line of the left side is kept within bounds, as it were, by the inward curving contours of the left arm. Thus in every respect this figure may be said to rank as one of the world's best bronzes. Fig. 77

In the temple at Koḍumuḍi, Coimbatore District are a number of early bronzes of which four are illustrated and dealt with here. They are a Vishṇu, a Naṭeśa, a Tripurāntaka with consort, and a devotee said to represent Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār.[1] A glance at them will show that they are very interesting. Apparently they do not belong to one and the same period. This is proved by the differences in modelling and decorative details noticed between the individual items. The earliest of them, namely, the Vishṇu may be assigned to the second quarter of the 10th century A.D., while the figure of the saint may be dated to 11th century A.D. This shows that this art was flourishing in the place, or for that matter, in this region which was called in olden times as the Koṅgu-maṇḍalam during this long period. That from still earlier periods this art was much in vogue in this region is known from the Trivikrama (Fig. 53) from Siṅgānallūr and that it had an unbroken continuity in this region is known from such other interesting items from Belūr as the Vīṇādhara (Fig. 56), the Chaṇḍikeśvara (Fig. 185), and the

1 These were also brought to my notice by Mr. R. Nagaswamy of the Madras Museum and I am thankful to him for this and for the photographs of the bronzes.

Naṭeśa (Fig. 294) which bears a dated inscription on its pedestal. But the four items mentioned above are of absorbing interest from the point of art.

Fig. 78 The Vishṇu has its place after the above Kirātamūrti but its affinity to the Taṇḍantoṭṭam bronzes discussed previous to it is also great.

It is an outstanding example of the art of the period. The difference in detail noticed in this is more due to the difference in the theme and the provenance. In spite of this apparent dissimilarity, owing to the somewhat heavy modelling and stunted size of this piece which are characteristic of the art of the period as evidenced by the above discussed pieces, one is tempted to attribute this bronze to the same school which produced the latter. The decorative details are treated in an exuberant manner. They include the fine *kirīṭa* with pronged ornament on its front side only, the *paṭṭa* round the head, *makara-kuṇḍalas* of exquisite workmanship gracefully hanging on the shoulders, the tresses of hair falling on the shoulders, broad *kaṇṭhī* framed by a ring which is not continued on the back side, the *yajñopavīta* of pearls and of three strands with a simple clasp on the left chest with a beautiful pendant hanging from the knot, the subdued shoulder ornament occurring only on the right side, *udara-bandha* with fine tassels hanging from its middle part, very ornate pronged *keyūra*, which is tied at the back in a charming manner, the elbow ornament of simple string type, thick bangles on the wrists, and rings on the fingers. The face is chubby and has an oval shape. The expression is one of calm self-absorption. The upper arms start, as is characteristic of the bronzes of this kind belonging to this period, from the elbow of the lower arms. The modelling of the torso and of the arms is splendid but some amount of distortion is apparent in the proportions of the arms. The lower right hand is in *abhaya*. The lower left hand is in the posture of holding the *gadā*, which is missing. The *cakra* and *śaṅkha* are held by the usual hands between the first two fingers. Interestingly the *cakra* is held with its rim facing us and it has four flames including the bottom one. Its workmanship is naturalistic. Similarly the *śaṅkha* is depicted in a beautiful manner. The fingers of the hands are rendered in an effective manner and the gestures are significant. The mole of *Śrīvatsa* is not depicted prominently and the long *hāra* hanging down to the right foot is absent.

The decorations of the part below the waist are very ornate; nevertheless they are charming. The most noteworthy of them are, the garment of which the folds are suggested by means of lines, the flowing *uttarīya* which is wound round the waist in two courses of which the lower one is in the form of a shallow loop, the bows and hanging ends of cloth occurring on the sides, which are heavy but full of flow and rhythm, the waist-band with very intricately worked clasp in front, which does not seem to show the *siṁha-mukha* design, the two long strings with their tips divided into three parts hanging

one on each thigh, the two ribbon-like ends of a band hanging one over the other between the legs, the string with a globular pendant hanging over the above, and the two deeply looped festoons with a long tassel in it hanging low, one on each thigh. Every one of these ornaments is well finished and extremely pleasing. The last mentioned detail gets further elaboration in such later figures as the Sītās (Figs. 90, 96) of the Paruttiyūr and the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr Rāma groups but it loses its importance gradually as time advanced. Another interesting detail seen in this bronze is the ring on the right calf, besides the *pādasaras* on the feet. To see this ornament in a piece of this period is rather interesting and peculiar, because such an ornament comes into general vogue only from the late phase of the School of Rājendra I to be dealt with below. But it must be mentioned here that even after the time of the Rājendra I's School, this detail is seen mostly in bronzes of deities other than Vishṇu and the occurrence of this in the present piece need not have any significance bearing on its date, but it may be taken only as a special feature introduced to enhance the glory of the bronze.

The back view is much more interesting than the front view. The most note- Fig. 79
worthy details of this side are the *śiraś-cakra* which is not a *cakra* but a real *padma* (lotus) with petals delineated in an exquisite manner, and the twisted strands of hair which are worked rather schematically. This is one of the characteristics of Vishṇus and of figures of their type of this period. The simple pendant hanging from these strands of hair, the knots of the *keyūras* of the arms, the charmingly frilled end of cloth tucked up in the middle of the waist, the two festoons and tassels, one on each thigh, and the flowing ends and bows, seen on the sides of the *uttarīya* tied round the waist are noteworthy. In fact the exuberance and beauty of workmanship of this figure are evident mostly on this side.

The last item of detail to be mentioned is the pedestal. It is an interesting work of art by itself. From its shape, it looks like a *bhadrāsana*, but two rows of beautiful lotus petals are introduced in the place of the mouldings of an *āsana* of this type, thus making it a composite *āsana*, which is a rare feature. A prominent spike is seen on either side of the pedestal.

From the above description it will be seen that, though this bronze has details somewhat similar to those from Taṇḍantoṭṭam and Siṅgānallūr, their totality together with the modelling of the figure gives it an appearance which makes it stand aloof from the earlier as well as the later representations of the same theme. This point will be glaring when this bronze is compared with the Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 91) from Paruttiyūr, discussed below, which may not be far removed in time from this. Thus

this bronze may be said to be a unique example of the art and may be assigned to about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

The group representing Tripurāntaka and Tripurasundarī from the same place *i.e.*, Koḍumuḍi may be assigned to about the same period as the Vishṇu discussed above. The magnificence of the two figures is apparent. Coming as they do from the Koṅgu country they possess certain peculiar features both in the decoration and in the modelling. They are, therefore, of great interest for the history of the art.

Fig. 80 Śiva as Tripurāntaka stands in the graceful *ālīdha-cum-dvi-bhaṅga* pose with the torso and head slightly bent backwards and with his left leg slightly bent at the knee and bent forward, and the right leg planted firmly on the *āsana*, a posture which suggests an imperceptible forward motion of the figure. Indeed all the majesty appropriate to the theme has been splendidly brought out by this posture. This, together with the very suggestive poses of the two lower hands, shows unmistakably the intention of the *sthapati* as well as his great skill, in portraying effectively the proverbial effortlessness exhibited by Śiva in destroying the demons of the three cities (Tirupurāsuras). It is said that Śiva, who was implored by the *devas* to vanquish the demons who were a menace to the three worlds, sought and obtained help from everyone of the *devas* like Vishṇu, Brahmā and Indra. With such elaborate preparations he met the Tripurāsuras at the battle-field. When the latter began to provoke Śiva to fighting, all that he did was to smile a little. That was enough to burn the demons and their followers into ashes. The whole universe was startled at this marvel of Śiva. This effortlessness of Śiva it is that is conveyed by the manner of depiction of the poses of the limbs.

This figure may be taken as a significant example in bronze representing a grand theme by a highly suggestive mode of gestures and pose. The objects on the matted-hair crown are not very prominent but the disposition of the little crescent moon and the *Dātura* is interesting. Of the ornaments, most noteworthy are the long and prominently shown shoulder pendant, which can be compared with the pendant on the thigh of the Pārvatī (Fig. 76) of the New York Museum, the *vastra-yajñopavīta* running over the right arms, the beautiful little *siṁha-mukha* clasp of the waist-band and the *nāga-valaya* type of *keyūras* on the arms. Interestingly no ear ornament is present, nor is there the elbow ornament which is however seen in the figure of Tripurasundarī of the group. The manner of showing the sash and of the two hanging ends of a *paṭṭa* is peculiar to this figure. This, together with the mode of wearing the *yajñopavīta* and the shoulder ornament, would tempt one to take the figure back to more ancient date. But the modelling and the style of the other details like the three

thick *kaṇṭhīs*, *makuṭa* and the *bāhu-valayas* are distinctly characteristic of images of the period under discussion.

The back view of this figure is, as usual, of great interest. The manner of decorating the crown by probably a feather, is novel. The *śiraś-cakra* is of the type of unbounded realistic full-blown flower. The most significant detail on this side is the pendant hanging from the *kaṇṭhī*, on the back. The other equally interesting detail is the depiction of prongs on the armlets on this side also. Perhaps this is the first instance where the armlets are shown to possess two distinctly different designs one in front and another at the back. Though the buttocks are modelled so as to show them in great relief, the purpose does not seem to have been achieved fully by this means. The effect of the *bhaṅga* is apparent in this side. Fig. 81

The Tripurasundarī stands also in a slight *bhaṅga*, and exhibits all the charm and grace met with in the Tripurāntaka discussed above. Here also the majesty of the posture is maintained, equal to the requirements of the subject. But unlike the Tripurāntaka the proportions of which are of a high order, the proportions as well as the modelling, of this figure are not very commendable. In other respects it is one of the rare specimens of the art so far known to us. The presence of the small figure of a maid adds to the importance of this figure, and though the former is a replica of the main figure, it has its own individuality which distinguishes it from the other two. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of Tripurasundarī is interesting as it is of the stunted type. The ears are empty. The manner of showing the armlets and elbow ornaments is peculiar. Though the modelling of the torso does not seem to be quite all right, its finish is artistic so as to make it appear beautiful. The *channavīra* is very much subdued. The *simha-mukha* clasp is noteworthy. The most interesting detail of this bronze is its lower garment. The manner in which its folds and the hanging end of cloth between the legs are depicted, is special to this figure. The addition of a pendant, similar to the one found in the Śiva figure, on the left thigh is noteworthy as it is only in the examples of this period that this feature is met with in such a prominent manner *e.g.*, the New York Pārvatī. The modelling of the breasts and of the arms are not upto the mark; but that of the part below the waist is superb, the slight flexion of the left side adding to the beauty of the whole figure. The features of the face are clear-cut and life-like. The sensitive lips and the prominent nose are specially noteworthy. The expression is serene. The hand of the uplifted right arm with the palm facing up shows the *kaṭaka-mudrā*, while the left hand in *lola* pose is resting on the head of the maid. The back side of the figure shows clearly the beauty of workmanship of the *makuṭa* and *śiraś-cakra*. The two rows of twisted strands of hair are interesting as also the pendent ornament. The modelling of the back side is certainly better than that of the front side.

The figure of the maid is noteworthy for its good proportions and beautiful decorations. The right hand is held up in adoration while a cup containing something is held in the left hand. Interestingly the lower garment of this figure is marked by the same details and decorations, including the pendant, as are found in the Tripurasundarī figure. The back view of this maid is of special interest as it shows *dhammilla* headdress with a ribbon across it. A similar headdress is noticed in the Sītā (Fig. 97) of the famous Vaḍukkuppaṇaiyūr Rāma group. These two figures of the group under study stand on an oblong *padmāsana* over a similar *bhadrāsana*. The workmanship of these *āsanas* is interesting as the petals are prominent as well as realistic. The oblong shape of the *āsana* of the *devī* figure though necessitated by the context of showing two figures on it, is found to be significant because *padmāsanas* of this shape are met with in more than one bronze of this period, *e.g.*, Tripurāntaka (Fig. 65), and Vṛishabhavāhana (Fig. 67), from Taṇḍantoṭṭam and only rarely in the bronzes of the subsequent or earlier periods. Thus the importance of these two bronzes for our study is great, and though their style is in accordance with the rules of the canons of the period, yet it is distinctive of the region where apparently there existed a highly developed school with distinctive traditions of its own.

Fig. 82 The Naṭeśa from the same place is another notable specimen of the art from the points of view of the mode of dance it depicts and style. That this also belongs to about this period is known from the manner in which the emblems of *ḍamaru* and *agni* in a receptacle are held as well as from the poses of the other two arms. The features of the face, and the decorative details of the head and the body support this. Amongst the ornaments especially noteworthy are the *makuṭa*-like arrangement of the *jaṭās* with the emblems therein shown, however, in a subdued form, the characteristic long beaded *hāra* together with a pair of *kaṇṭhīs*, the *nāga-valaya* type of armlets shown high up as in the other bronzes from this place, the characteristic *vāji-bandha* tied rather low on the elbow, the stiff waist-band with the *simha-mukha motif* prominent in it, the stiff sash in two courses of which the lower one forming a short constricted loop after emerging out from eye-holes on either side and the *pādasaras* of *kiṅkiṇis*. Apart from these, in the right shoulder is seen something projecting out. That is the hood of a serpent of which the full figure is seen only from the back side. Interestingly as in the case of the above discussed Tirupurāntaka group, here too no ear-rings are found.

Fig. 83 At the back are seen other interesting details such as the *śiraś-cakra*, the simple strands of hair falling on the back of the head in a naturally swaying manner and the pendent ornament seen in the middle of the strands as if dividing them into two groups. This pendant is not usually met with in Naṭeśa figures, although the representations of other aspects of Śiva are endowed with it; so, here it is a peculiarity.

The most interesting thing about this Naṭeśa is that there is no Apasmāra Purusha under the foot. In none of the Naṭeśas discussed in this book the Apasmāra is absent. The uniqueness of this figure is therefore apparent. That the depiction of Apasmāra was never contemplated in this bronze is apparent from the fact that the figure is made to dance only on a simple circular *āsana* which is affixed to the *padmāsana* of archaic workmanship. The reason for the absence of the Apsmāra is not known. Probably the Koṅgu *sthapatis* had traditions of their own regarding the iconography of images as is evident from the interesting maid figure associated with the Tripurasundarī of the Tripurāntaka group dealt with above, and the absence of the ear ornaments in the Tripurāntaka and Tripurasundarī as well as the Naṭeśa under study. In Tamilnāḍ Apasmāra is depicted in stone sculptures since the time of Rājasiṁha Pallava (*circa* 700-720 A.D.) and only very rarely images of Naṭeśa, without this figure, are seen. But a number of early Naṭeśas without the figure of Apasmāra are known from the Kannaḍa country. The Koṅgu country being contiguous to the Kannaḍa country, the traditions of the latter seem to have influenced the *sthapatis* of the former. Hence the creation of this remarkable Naṭeśa by them.

Besides this, the mode of dance represented here is *catura*. Almost all the early Naṭeśas, especially from the Kannaḍa country, are in this mode. This is another piece of evidence to show the existence of traditions of this region in the Koṅgu country.

The last detail to be noticed about this figure is its pedestal. The workmanship of the petals, the undue prominence given to the seed vessel and the manner of casting the spikes intended to receive the *prabhāvaḷi*, all these apparently indicate that it is contemporary with the figure.

A word about its modelling is necessary. While the arms are slender and the torso is proportionate and beautiful, the part below the waist is rather disproportionate. This is apparent in the manner in which the legs are worked. Had there not been this defect this piece would be a splendid one. Despite this slight flaw in modelling that it is a masterly representation of the theme is obvious at a glance. Thus the bronzes found in the temple at Koḍumuḍi are invaluable for a study of the art, because though they fall in line with the products of the schools of other regions, yet they are unmistakably based on strong local traditions which seem to have been in vogue here for a long time.

At Tiruveṇkāḍu in the Tanjore District were found as treasure-trove finds two groups of bronzes, one in 1954 and another in 1959. Of the former group, consisting of eight pieces, seven belonged to Rājarāja I's period while the eighth belonged to Rājādhirāja's time as testified to by the inscriptions found in the temple. Of the recently discovered items, three bronzes are of great interest for our study. They are a Chaṇḍikeśvara, an

Ardhanārī, and a Somāskanda. While the latter two belong to the time of Rājarāja I, the Chaṇḍikeśvara, on grounds of style, requires to be taken up immediately after the Koḍumuḍi bronzes discussed above.

Fig. 84 The *makuṭa* of the Chaṇḍikeśvara is *jaṭā-makuṭa* but it is short and cylinder-like with flower designs at the top. There is only one *kaṇṭhī* on the neck, the *yajñopavīta* is of twisted strands and the armlets are of the *nāga-valaya* type. The elbow ornament and the shoulder ornament are not seen. However, a few strands of hair are seen on each shoulder. The *simha-mukha* clasp is elaborately worked. But the workmanship of the armlets is beautiful. The simplicity of ornamentation and the excellent modelling and the splendid *sātvika* expression on the face make the bronze a superb specimen. That these also characterise the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velaṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 121) is noteworthy. The figure is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on a *bhadrāsana*. The treatment of the arms and legs of this figure will be found to be akin to that of the Kirātamūrti from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi (Fig. 74), which is another proof for its position after the latter. The right hand is in the posture of holding the *paraśu* which is missing while the left hand is in the *āhāya-varada* pose. The pedestal is worked in a pleasing manner with good proportions and beautiful mouldings.

Fig. 85 At the back the details that are noteworthy are the tier-wise arrangement of the small curls of hair making up the *jaṭā-makuṭa*, as well as the twisted strands of hair, falling on the back, divided by the pendant which has become not only comparatively small in size but also has lost its prominence. Here it has become almost indistinguishable from the strands of hair, a feature seen to mark the bronzes produced hereafterwards. The tier-wise arrangement of the curls of hair is seen for the first time here but this feature is found to recur in the figures of this saint as well as in figures representing Kṛishṇa belonging to the subsequent periods. The identification of the figure suggested here is based on the style of the *makuṭa*, the poses of the hands and the manner of sitting. If it is so, then it must be the earliest representation of the saint in this posture.

Fig. 86 The Somāskanda from Sorakkuḍi is the Tanjore District in obviously in the same style in which the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 84) discussed above is made. Hence this bronze may also be assigned to the same period. Unfortunately even here the baby Skanda is missing. But compared to the Somāskanda from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu this will be seen artistically to be inferior to that. Besides, this bronze has certain details which require to be mentioned. They include the stunted *makuṭa*, the absence of the shoulder ornament and the not too well treated shoulders of Śiva and the short *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the not too well modelled breasts, the interesting *utkuṭik-āsana*, in which she is seated and the garment with beautiful flower designs on it, of Umā.

The back of both the figures, shows only simple workmanship. But the manner in which the hair of both of them is arranged is noteworthy. The hair of Śiva is done in the usual twisted strands while that of Umā is worked into short curls which are arranged in two tiers. It may, however, be mentioned here the fact that here the tier-wise arrangement of hair is not obviously not so good as that found in the previous bronze. The *śiraś-cakra* of both the figures is of the unbounded simple type. The *bhadrāsana* on which both the figures are seated is seen to be akin in workmanship to that of the *āsanas* of the bronzes examined above. This piece is another interesting specimen of the art of the period. Fig. 87

At Okkūr in the Tanjore District a number of bronzes were discovered. All of them do not belong to the same period. Of these the Naṭeśa may be taken up next for examination. It has been described by the authors of the *Catalogue* on p. 115.[1] Fig. 88

Their description brings out clearly the novelty of the theme represented by this bronze, the simple but archaic style of workmanship (not 'crude' as the learned authors of the *Catalogue* have called it) and sparceness of details, which have compelled those authors to call it "an early image" in spite of the fact that "its necklaces are very unlike those of images of Choḷa type". They have, however, rightly recognised the similarity between the *prabhās* of this Naṭeśa and the Nallūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 51). In order to understand the importance of the figure, it is necessary to give a fuller description of it than what is given in the *Catalogue*.

The headdress of this figure shows for the first time the crescent and the *Dātura* in the round, the former on the proper right side and the latter on the proper left side. The skull too is very prominent. Behind the skull are seen feathers, which obviously represent the peacock feathers. And this is also the first time when this feature is met with in a Naṭeśa bronze. In such Naṭeśa figures as the one from Tiruvāḷaṅgāḍu (Fig. 164) this feature is seen at the height of its development. This is attached to the *prabhā*. Another interesting feature of the headdress is the *jaṭās* that are spread out on either side of the head. Four braided locks are seen on each side, each in simple wave form which is not agitated but slow-moving. The tips of all of them are slightly curved and attached to the props of the *prabhā*. In none of the Naṭeśas examined so far, do we find this feature. It becomes stereotyped very soon as is seen in the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram (Fig. 93) to be discussed below. In the still later Naṭeśas, not only does each *jaṭā* become ornate but the space between two consecutive *jaṭās* becomes negligible. The wide space that existes between the *jaṭās* here is therefore another early feature. It is also noteworthy that, being an early example, these *jaṭās* neither carry flowers nor other

[1] *Op. cit*, Pl. XXI, Fig. 3.

ornaments on them nor any mermaid representing Gaṅgā. The absence of the latter marks some of the Naṭeśas belonging to a slightly later date also. A prominent rosary of *Rudrāksha* berries goes round the head.

The face is oval but the forehead is long and broad. The third eye is slightly visible. The eye-brows and eyes too are rubbed down. The nose is delicately rendered. The lips are tender and sensitive. The right ear is empty while on the left ear is seen a thick *patra-kuṇḍala*. The expression is not determinable owing to the erasure of features, but it probably suggests divine composure.

Neck is normal and there are two simple necklets on it. The upper one shows a thick gem-like thing in its middle. The lower necklet is undoubtedly made of *Rudrāksha* berries and from it hangs down a pendant in the shape of a tooth of an animal. Necklets of similar kind of berries are usually seen on the neck of Śiva. Coming to the *udara-bandha*, it is also worked in a manner which unmistakably shows that this feature is in its beginning stages. It is definitely an *uttarīya* which is worn round the stomach. One of its ends is tied in a simple but pronounced loop in front of the stomach. The other end, in a single strand, not in two strands as is seen in the Naṭeśas of subsequent periods, flows in a simple wave form to the left side and its tip, worked in a zig-zag manner, is attached to the prop of the *prabhā*. In the Nallūr Naṭeśa alone amongst such bronzes, were seen ends of cloth flowing on either side and joining the *prabhā*. There also the ends of the *uttarīya* were wound round the waist. The *yajñopavīta* is thick and simple and it is only single-stranded.

The modelling of the figure is also interesting because though it is somewhat slender and flat and shows one or two difficult bends, necessitating an uneven flow of the lines of the sides, yet the salient qualities of the modelling of the bronzes discussed above are noticeable in this also. Shoulders are somewhat high and they are devoid of ornamentation, which is another characteristic of bronzes in archaic style.

There are only four arms in this figure. The upper arms start directly from the shoulder joint and they are therefore distinct from the other pair. Although this has been beautifully worked, a feature which might suggest an earliar date for the figure, the apparent angularities at the elbows of the three arms as well as the poor treatment of the fore-arms and hands clearly negative that suggestion. However, the manner of showing the *gaja-hasta* is not only reminiscent of the same feature of the Nallūr and Poruppū-mettuppaṭṭi Naṭeśas, but also a clear precursor of the feature found in the Naṭeśa from Sivapuram discussed below. The upper right hand holds a *ḍamaru* by all its fingers; the corresponding left hand holds by its thumb and the first two fingers a small realistically worked bowl containing a flame of fire of extremely simple workmanship. The

lower right hand is in *abhaya*. Here the treatment of the fingers is noteworthy. They seem to be life-like but are not obviously refined. The other arm is in the *gaja-hasta* pose. Between the upper part of this arm and the other arm on this side is seen a piece of cloth. It partly covers the former arm. Its interest lies in the fact that unlike the same detail in other Naṭeśas, it is broad and simple in style, which makes it another important detail of this figure. Just as in the Naṭeśa from Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi, here also, a serpent of beautiful workmanship is wound round the forearm of the lower right arm. No armlet is seen on the arms but a simple bangle is seen on each wrist. No elbow ornament is present.

The style of the legs is not quite perfect as is seen by the disproportionately slender thighs. But the part below the knee and the feet are done in a splendid manner. The lines that bound the mass of the legs too are not without charm in spite of the above mentioned defect. On each foot is a *pādasara* with prominent *kiṅkiṇis* attached to it. The loin-cloth is thick and its end is seen hanging between the legs. The waist-band is thick and it has a knot in front.

So far as the arms are concerned their postures seem to show a fixed type, and their contractions are necessitated by the narrow space of the *prabhā*. But the postures of the legs apparently have not yet been prefected so as to make it a good specimen of the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* Naṭeśa. The left leg is not lifted up so much as in later figures. The *sthapatis* who did the Naṭeśas noticed above were also unsuccessful in their attempt to show this form of dance perfectly. The posture of the left leg of this figure being almost similar to the other *ānanda-tāṇḍava* Naṭeśas, it may be said that the *sthapati* of this figure has undoubtedly come nearer to the solution than his predecessors and thus his work had paved the way for the perfection of the theme and its beautiful representation, by his immediate successors.

The dance is performed by the god with the right leg planted on Apasmāra Purusha who is shown as a very small dwarf. But the workmanship of this figure too is not without merits. The face is naturalistic; the right arm is lifted up in order to balance the raised hood of the serpent which he holds in the left hand. Even the legs are modelled exquisitely. Unlike the dwarfs of Naṭeśas examined above, here this figure does not display any bulging out of the stomach; nor is its expression pitiable.

The dwarf lies on his stomach with the face towards the proper right of Naṭeśa, on a *padmāsana*. The manner in which the *āsana* is worked is quite different from that of any bronzes examined so far. It is oval in form. There are the double lotuses with the line demarcating them delineated clearly. But it is the workmanship of the petals which is very interesting. Each petal is broad and shows for the first time a line marked

along its rim. Moreover, the smaller intermediate petals are also larger than the corresponding ones in other figures. They are, however, seen, not from the bottom upwards but only from half way, the larger petals having, upto that part, been shown close together.

It may be noted here that none of the Naṭeśa figures, described above, possessed a *padmāsana* and the occurrence for the first time of the *āsana* in a form in which the same *āsana* of some of the later Naṭeśas is also done, is yet another novelty of this figure. There are two holes, both in the front and back sides of the lower series of petals of the *āsana*, intended to secure the figure firmly to another pedestal, a *bhadr-āsana*, which is missing here, during the time when it was taken out in procession.

The most interesting detail of this figure is the *prabhāvaḷi*. Two other early bronzes also show the detail. But the type of *prabhā* in each of them is different. Here a third type is seen of which another more refined example is seen in the Naṭeśa from Sivapuram (Fig. 93). Though the authors of the *Catalogue* have drawn our attention to the similarity between this *prabhā* and that of the Nallūr Naṭeśa which is good in so far as it confers on this bronze the right to claim antiquity, yet on a close examination of these two *prabhās*, more differences than similarities are noticeable between them. Without dialating further, we may say that this *prabhā* is comparatively more beautiful than the other, both in its form as well as in the arrangement of the flames on its fringe. The prop-like parts which are thick and oval in cross section spring up straight from the ends of the oval *padmāsana*. Except for a slight tilt to the left, they are perpendicular to the floor level upto nearly three-fourths of their height from where they curve in to form the beautiful arch. There are no grooves incised on the *prabhā*. Three-tongued flames, nine on each side are shown on it, with a larger flame perched on the crest of the *prabhā*. Below this top-most flame is shown a floral pattern from which hang down two tassels. The simplicity of workmanship of the flames is apparent in that the bottom of each of them is thick and broad, not rounded as in later images and the tongues of the flames especially of the large central one are shown in a simple wave form.

Fig. 89 The back view of the figure is very interesting as it shows clearly the utter simplicity of style of the whirling locks of hair and the beauty of workmanship of the torso and the *prabhā*. The locks consist merely of simple twisted strands of hair, which are very similar to those of the Belūr Vīṇādhara (Fig. 56) discussed above. No *śiraś-cakra* is seen. All these details go to show that this Naṭeśa is a very important example of the transition period when the earlier forms of Naṭeśa were given up and the new, world-renowned Chidambaram or *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form was in the process of being perfected. In a way, therefore, this bronze may be said to be at the head of hundreds of representations of *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form of Naṭeśa, and its importance cannot therefore

be exaggerated. Elsewhere[1] we have said that it was probably during the time of Parāntaka I that the very first example in stone of the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form of Naṭeśa was created. That the *sthapatis* of the period created Naṭeśas in this mode of dance in metal also, is proved by this interesting specimen.

The Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa from Paruttiyūr, Tanjore District may also be assigned to this period. This is the first time that we meet with bronzes representing this grand theme. Their workmanship is obviously resplendent and the rendering of each one of their details is extremely pleasing and admirable. Their modelling is highly proportionate and the balancing of the individual items of the group in the composition as a whole is almost perfect. Above all, the sublime expression that characterises the faces of the figures is unparalleled. All this can naturally be expected in the representation of a noble theme during the time when the people were suffused with a highly refined spiritual outlook on life and consequently with unquenchable thirst for perfection in every one of their actions. Fig. 90

Rāma stands in the beautiful *dvi-bhaṅga* posture with the hands in the *kaṭaka* poses. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is shown tapering beautifully. Of the ornaments, the two *kaṇṭhīs* and the simple *makara-kuṇḍalas* are fine; the pronged *keyūras* with broad tassels hanging from their lower part are slightly ornate; the *vājī-bandha* is prominent; the *udara-bandha* is simple; and the ornate waist-band has an equally ornate *siṁha-mukha* clasp in front. The most noteworthy ornament noticed in this figure is the three-pronged pendant that hangs on the right shoulder. This is, as has been seen above, is a characteristic decoration met with in the bronzes of this school, and this gets modified as time passed on. Even in the case of the Rāma of the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr group (Fig. 96) belonging to a later or last phase of this School, this ornament is of a different shape. The *yajñopavīta* is in three strands which are shown as flowing in a splendidly naturalistic manner. The shorts bear flower and creeper designs and above all the so-called sword-like projection of the piece of cloth is noteworthy. Though the limbs seem to be somewhat plump, their smooth modelling and good proportions off-set this amply.

The Lakshmaṇa, though similar to Rāma, has certain details not found in the latter. The headdress is of the ornamental *kīrīṭa-makuṭa* variety; ears are not adorned, the *kaṇṭhīs* are simple, and only the *vājī-bandha* is present on the arms. Interestingly instead of the *yajñopavīta*, he wears a *channavīra* characteristic of a soldier.

The Sītā bronze of this group is a unique specimen and is obviously quite different, in feeling and decoration, from the Sītā of the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr group. It stands in

[1] P. R. Srinivasan, *Śiva Naṭarāja, the Cosmic Dancer* in the *Roopa-Lekha*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2 and XXVII, Nos. 1 and 2.

graceful *tri-bhaṅga*. Unlike the Vaḍakkupaṇṇaiyūr Sītā, this one is intact and all of its details can be easily noticed. Interestingly she holds her right hand in *kaṭaka* and the left hand in *lola*. The characteristic *vāji-bandha* is prominently depicted. Besides, the *kaṅkaṇa* with prominent knob is also noteworthy. The *kaṇṭhīs* and the *channavīra* are charming. Similar is the case with the workmanship of the under garment. The waist-band, in two courses, shows charming pearly tassels and festoons. The depiction of the tucking-up, on the right side, of one of the ends of cloth and the manner of showing the other end hanging between the legs are singularly pleasing.

The hair-doing is special to this figure. The face is rather roundish which is characteristic of the bronzes of this school. Above all, as has been said above, the modelling and proportions of this figure are of an exceedingly high order. In fact this bronze is one of the most charming representations of an ideal woman. Each of these three figures stands on a circular *padmāsana* the petals of which are treated in a highly realistic manner. Moreover, the style of this *āsana* may be seen to be at an earlier stage of development than that of *āsanas* of the figures of the Vaḍakkuppaṇṇaiyūr group. The back view of these wonderful pieces of art is not available. If it could be had, it will reveal their grandeur in an all the more marked manner.

Thus all the three bronzes are undoubtedly great masterpieces of this school, the like of which were produced only rarely during the subsequent periods.

Fig. 91 To a slightly later period may be assigned the beautiful Śrīnivāsa from the same place, namely Paruttiyūr.

In spite of the fact that this is only in the *sama-bhaṅga* (erect) posture it is apparently graceful: for, it being obviously a product of the family of *sthapatis* who created the Rāma set dealt with above, all the glory of the art met with there, is also revealed by this piece. This is noticed in the rendering of every one of the parts of the figure and in each of the ornaments and embellishments. The *kirīṭa* is interesting as its shape is cylindrical rather than conical. The emblems of conch and discus are simple but show small flames at all important points. The most interesting ornament namely the shoulder-pendant is smaller than that met with in the Rāma discussed above. But on either shoulder is seen a strand of curly hair in a beautiful wavy form. The facial features are akin to those of the figures of the above discussed Rāma set.

The depiction of the *pītāmbara* which is here shown as of superfine quality and clinging to the legs, is marvellous and the embellishments seen on the waist including the front loops and the side bows of the sashes, though ornate, are examples of superb workmanship. The detailed chiselling of the clasp of the waist-band may be seen to be the precursor of the same detail met with in such bronzes as the Rāma from Vaḍakkup-

paṇaiyūr. The *padmāsana* of this figure is, however, slightly less interesting than that of the Rāma discussed above. It is regrettable that the back view of this marvellous piece also is not available.

A remarkable group of bronzes was unearthed at Śivapuram in the Tanjore District some years ago. It consists of a Naṭeśa, a Somāskanda, a Gaṇeśa, two Devīs, and a Jñānasambanda. Of these the former three appear to belong to the period under discussion while the rest may be assigned to later periods. One of the chief reasons for assigning the former two bronzes to this period is the characteristic elbow ornament with the projecting piece shown very conspicuously. This is found to be an invariable concomitant of a number of female and male figures, belonging to the latter half of Parāntaka I's rule, it being more prominently seen in female figures than in male figures. This feature is repeated in a much more prominent manner in some of the images belonging to the periods after that of Rājarāja I. But there, this ornament is very ornate, and its projecting piece is absent from figures belonging to the school of Rājarāja I. One or two examples with prominent elbow ornaments have already been examined. A few more will be dealt with below. As has already been said above more than once, the presence or absence of any single detail cannot be taken as the criterion for dating the bronzes. Along with the presence of a prominent feature, other details and technical qualities of the bronzes should be studied and if all of them collectively point to a style then only they may be said to be in that style. In the case of bronzes under discussion, besides the elbow ornament, their modelling and other details are also characteristic of the products of the school of Parāntaka I. The descriptions of these bronzes are as follows where attention is drawn to their other special features.

Let us first take up the Somāskanda. So far only two Somāskanda figures have been noticed. One from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 36) and the other from Sorakkuḍi (Fig. 86). In both of them Skanda is missing. In the present case the group is complete; the baby Skanda too is fortunately preserved. He is shown in between Śiva and Umā behind their resting legs. In both the earlier Somāskandas the space where the Skanda of those groups should have stood is in front. In some other early Somāskanda figures too, the Skanda figure is shown in front, while in yet other groups the figure of Skanda is shown behind as in the present instance. It therefore seems that there is probably no special significance attached to the position of Skanda in the group. Fig. 92

Śiva and Umā are seated as usual on an oblong *bhadrāsana* which has a pair of spikes to receive a *prabhāvaḷi*. The *āsana* is simple and the indentation above the roll-moulding does not even contain any spacers. The absence of these is noteworthy because up till the Somāskanda (Fig. 86) from Sorakkuḍi, these are found invariably in the *āsanas*. Śiva seated in the *sukhāsana* pose has a thick and comparatively short

jaṭā-mākuṭa, which is less clear than that of Vṛishabhavāhana (Fig. 67) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam, on account of the encrustation of sand etc. But the crescent moon, the *Dātura* flower, the serpent and the *paṭṭa* on the forehead are all seen. The face is round but shows a tendency to become square. The eyes, eye-brows, nose, lips and ears are moulded exquisitely well. Especially the nose and the lips are superb. It is they that are primary indicators of the early date of the group. The right ear is empty while a naturalistic *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the left ear. Expression on the face suggests supreme bliss.

On the neck are two or three necklets of which the lowest is broad and thick. The *yajñopavīta* is thick and it is probably of the *vastra* variety. The curves it takes have been rendered in a beautiful and effective manner. A thick knot with a bit of thread (?) projecting out is seen on the left chest. The *udara-bandha* is broad and has a thick gem in front. The modelling of the torso is exceedingly proportionate and beautiful. The shoulders are slightly drooping. A pair of braided locks adorns gracefully each shoulder. The additional pendant, usually seen in the figures of this school, is present on the right shoulder. The method of joining the arms to the torso is obviously in a more developed stage than that met with in the Somāskanda (Fig. 86) from Soraikkuḍi, dealt with above.

Of the four arms, the upper ones, as usual, spring up right from the elbows. Their treatment is nevertheless highly refined, that of the fingers being delicate and tender. *Nāga-valayas* are seen on the arms which go round them thrice. Three *valayas* are seen on each wrist. Rings adorn the fingers. The *paraśu* (axe) held in the upper right hand is missing while a small beautiful deer facing Śiva is held in the corresponding left hand. Lower right hand is in *abhaya-mudrā* while the corresponding left hand is in *ākāya-varada-mudrā*.

Legs are modelled in a splendid manner. The bends and other difficult aspects have been dealt with by the *sthapati* deftly and effortlessly. The loin-cloth is worked tastefully. The *uttarīya* is wound round the waist twice, the bands being broad and naturalistic. The lowest of them is shown with a broad loop in front which is seen outside the resting left leg. Over the loop are seen the two ends of the waist-band which are apparently more evolved than those of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Somāskanda and the Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38). The bows and flowing ends are charmingly depicted at the sides. At the right side along the right leg is seen the hanging end of the *uttarīya* with simple tip. The waist-band shows the *simha-mukha* which is large and has features suggesting too much of grinning. The horn-like threads seen on the head of this lion-face are more developed. *Pādasaras* are present on the feet.

Umā is seated in the *utkuṭikāsana* with the right leg bent and kept somewhat slantingly on the pedestal and the left leg hanging down. A high *jaṭā-makuṭa* is seen on the head. It is decorated with flowers in a beautiful manner. The fillet is broad and covers three-fourths of the forehead. As in the case of Pārvatī and Tripurasundarī figures from Taṇḍantoṭṭam the forms of whose faces are different from those of the faces of the respective Śiva figures, here too the face of Umā is somewhat elongated; but its treatment is as usual beautiful. *Makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears; two *kaṇṭhīs*, one broad and the other thin, adorn the neck; *yajñopavīta* of cloth (?) with a beautiful knot over the left chest is seen depicted in a wavy form, the breasts are full and beautifully modelled which is characteristic of specimens of the school of Parāntaka I, and the beauty of the torso is brought out not only by the delicate treatment of the navel portion but also by the sensitive and rhythmic lines that enclose it. Shoulders are strong but sensuous. The arms are beautiful on account of their good proportions and gestures, although they may seem to be slightly thick. The right forearm rests on the right thigh and its hand is in the *kaṭaka-mudrā*. The left forearm which is also attached to the left thigh has its hand in the *āhūya-varada-mudrā*. The *keyūras* show a triangular upper part and tassels below. Most interesting detail of this hand is the *vājī-bandha* with a prominent fan-like projection outside, which is noteworthy for its size and beauty.

The treatment of the legs seems to be slightly less praiseworthy. They are a bit heavy and especially the part below the knee appears to be shorter. The manner of showing the bend in the right leg is not commendable, but every care has been taken to depcit the posture beautifully. Due to the encrustation, the manner in which the lower garment is worked is not clearly seen. Nevertheless that it is the thick variety usually met with in the bronzes of this period is easily known but whether its folds are shown in wave-over-wave form or not cannot be said definitely. The *uttarīya* which is wound round the waist has a very shallow loop in front and simple monoliform tassels hang down from it. One of the ends which is spread over the pedestal shows at its tip that hangs down the pedestal, a simple wave pattern. *Pādasaras* are present.

Now taking these two figures individually, each becomes a masterpiece in several respects in spite of a slight failure on the part of the *sthapati* as encountered in the Umā. Somehow, while grouping them, the *sthapati* again seems to have erred a little. For, the effect of the group composition is lessened by bringing the figures too close together. It would not have been so much if the space between them was sufficient to take the figure of Skanda. In the absence of enough space, the group seems to suffer from over-crowding.

The figure of Skanda is apparently a gem amongst figures of its kind. Every one of its features is treated with a verve and understanding. The modelling is perfect, the decoration is restrained and tasteful and the posture which may be said to be dancing, is rendered in a superb manner. Above all its proportions are fine and the rhythm of its line is charming. *Karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of a type similar to that of Rāma (Fig. 96) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr, broad necklets, *channavīra* from the knot of which hangs a tasssel, the waist-band with its swaying ends shown on the thighs are also done in the characteristic style of the period. The posture of the legs may be found to be akin to that of Naṭeśa (Fig. 107) from Tiruvaraṅguḷam to be dealt with below. On these grounds this may be dated to about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

Thus the Somāskanda is one of the best figures of its kind in bronze. The quality of workmanship met with here is exemplified much better by the Naṭeśa from the same place.

Fig. 93 That this Naṭeśa[1] is a magnificent example will be apparent when it is compared with others. And it is also important in that it is one of the earliest Naṭeśas in bronze in the perfect *ānanda-tāṇḍava* pose. There is no doubt that the details of this Naṭeśa are definitely more refined and developed than those of the Naṭeśa from Okkūr (Fig. 88). The striking developments that are seen here are the *prabhāvaḷī* and *jatās*. When this is compared with the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi, (Fig. 117), which according to us seems to represent the next stage of development of the theme, it is seen that although the *prabhā* of the latter is a little more developed than that of the former, the simple strands of whirling *jaṭās* with much space between any two of them, a feature which at once reminds one of the *jaṭās* of the Okkūr Naṭeśa and the *padmāsana* of which the workmanship is simpler and more beautiful than the *padmāsana* of the Naṭeśa under discussion seem to suggest an earlier date for it than that of the Śivapuram Naṭeśa. Though the elements of more ancient traditions are seen to persist in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, its other details such as the facial features, decorations and the treatment of the limbs are all highly evolved and there is therefore little or no room to suspect that it is earlier than the Naṭeśa examined now which in spite of a few developed details such as the *jaṭās* and the *padmāsana*, is in other respects definitely earlier as will be seen from the following description of the figure.

Jaṭās are spread out on either side of head. There are five of them on each side with a strand in between two, decorated with flowers. The *jaṭās* show apparently greater motion than is observed in the Naṭeśa from Okkūr. The deep curls at the end of each *jaṭā* only goes to emphasise this fact. A specially noteworthy feature of the *jaṭās*

[1] See *Lalit Kalā*, No. 5 where it has been noticed by us.

is that they do not show the figure of Gaṅgā. Above is seen *makuṭa*-like decoration which is nothing but peacock feathers arranged in a manner simulating a *jaṭā-mukṭa*. Unlike the Naṭeśas from Okkūr and Velāṅkaṇṇi where this detail is attached to the bottom of the crest of the *prabhā* here, though it is obviously attached to it, its tip goes beyond its frame, an originality of treatment which is distinctive of the works of early schools of bronzes. Below this *makuṭa* is seen an end of cloth displayed fan-wise. The crescent and the *Dātura* flower and the skull (?) at centre are all shown in bold relief. The fillet that goes round the head is worked beautifully.

The treatment of the face of Naṭeśa is superb and its features are unsurpassed for naturalism, majesty and supreme tranquillity. The slight upward tilt of the face gives it all the grandeur that it possesses. Though there is little or no difference between the facial features of this Naṭeśa and those of the Śiva of the Somāskanda group, yet the contexts being different, here the features seem to be endowed with a special splendour.

On the neck are seen two necklets, one of them thin and another broad, with a small pendant hanging from its middle, and a *mālā* of *Rudrāksha* berries with probably a pendant of a tooth, which is not seen on account of the *mālā* being hidden by the arm in *kari-hasta*. As has already been said, this long *mālā* is a characteristic ornament of Śiva figures as well as of figures of a few other deities pertaining to Śaivite pantheon. The *uttarīya* is tied in a beautiful manner round the stomach, with a small graceful loop, here shown distinctly on the right side, whereas in the Okkūr Naṭeśa, in which this occurs for the first time, it is seen in front of the stomach, instead of at the side. Henceforward, this loop becomes a regular feature of all the Naṭeśas, developing as time passed, in a variety of ways. The two ends of cloth that flow on the left side of Naṭeśa, are seen fluttering more vigorously than the flowing ends of Okkūr Naṭeśa. The line of bifurcation between these ends is seen only towards their tips and one of the two ends has gone beyond the *prabhā* and has almost hidden away the flame at that point. In later Naṭeśas, the tips of the flowing ends seldom go beyond the *prabhā*. The depiction of the flow, it must be mentioned, is singularly charming. There is the usual piece of cloth or hide of an animal (?) thrown over the left arm at the point where it joins the shoulder. Of the two ends of this the one on the outerside is broad and its tip is shown in a wavy form. Sometimes this piece of cloth is narrow and in very late figures of Naṭeśa it looses its importance.

As regards the workmanship of the torso, the remarks offered while describing the Śiva of the Somāskanda group from the same place are applicable to this figure also. But the theme represented here being a dynamic one, the trunk is bent to suit the posture. The bend noticed here is minimum and it is executed with rare skill. On the right shoulder hangs the usual pendant which is prominent and beautiful.

The treatment of the arms is simply grand. Though a slightly slenderer modelling would have enhanced its beauty a hundred-fold, yet it is quite proportionate to the entire figure. Surprisingly a few of the details that characterise the marvellous Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu have been already anticipated here *e.g.*, the poses of the upper left arm and the lower right arm and the posture of the head. On the arms are seen *nāga-valayas* as well as the interesting band at the elbow. The latter does not show any projecting piece which was noticed in a marked manner in the Umā of the Somāskanda discussed above. *Valayas* and rings beautify the wrists and the fingers respectively. The upper right hand which also goes beyond the *prabhā*, holds the *ḍamaru*, between the thumb and the middle finger. The lower right hand is in *abhaya-mudrā*. On its fore-arm is seen the serpent of which the hood is missing. In the palm of the upper left arm is seen a small bowl with a five-tongued flame of fire of which the bottom is rounded. It is interesting to note that this flame seems to be almost a replica of the flame that crowns the *prabhā*. The bowl of flame is held in a gentle and graceful manner. This hand too goes beyond the frame of the *prabhā*. The lower left arm is in *gaja-hasta* pose pointing to the lifted foot. It may be mentioned here that the *sthapati* who made this bronze had dealt with this posture, which seems to have given trouble even to the *sthapatis* who created the Naṭeśas from Velāṅkaṇṇi and Tanjore, with consummate skill.

Coming to the legs, their conception and execution are magnificent and so in this respect this figure may be said to be unsurpassed by any other figure. The tenderness and delicacy that are evident in the treatment of them have probably set the standard for such Naṭeśa figures as those from Tiruvaraṅguḷam and Tiruvālaṅgāḍu. The balance seen in this figure is exquisite and is even better than the same feature met with in any other Naṭeśa including those from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu and Tanjore. Beautiful *pāḍasaras* are seen on the feet. The absence of anklets is to be noted because it becomes a characteristic feature of Naṭeśas belonging to periods after about 1100 A.D.

At the back of the figure we see the glory of the spreading of the *jaṭās* and the beautiful manner of dressing of the *jaṭā-makuṭa*. Noteworthy is the manner of joining of the ends of the two wings of the spread out *jaṭās* at the back of the head and fixing them up in position by a pretty little fully blossomed flower. The other interesting detail met with here is the pendant ornament hanging from the neck. As has been seen above, it is found as a rule in Śiva and Śaivite figures and it is also seen in some of the figures of deities of other religions also belonging to this period. The absence of *śiraś-cakra* may also be noted, because it occurs in the Nallūr Naṭeśa and the Taṇḍantoṭṭam Naṭeśa but not in the Okkūr Naṭeśa, nor does it occur in the Velāṅkaṇṇi and Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśas. It is seen again in Naṭeśa images dating after about 1100 A.D.

Quite in keeping with the tenor of workmanship of the Naṭeśa is that of the dwarfish Apasmāra Purusha struggling under the weight of the Lord. The dwarf lies prostrate and the effect of the crushing weight above is beautifully depicted by showing the head as if severed from the body. The facial features of Apasmāra Purusha are sharp and they reflect remarkably the abject misery of the demon. The left hand holds the serpent and the right hand is extended towards it. The poses of the legs too are interesting as also the ornaments.

This figure lies on a double-lotus *āsana* of oval shape. From the two extreme points of its longer side rises the *prabhā*. The petals of the *padmāsana* are obviously evolved and they are no longer mutually distinct. Further, their tips show a prominent curl. This feature is seen usually in later figures and its presence here is therefore puzzling. But the workmanship of the *prabhā* as well as of the figures of Naṭeśa and Apasmāra being definitely early, it may be presumed that the conventionalisation of the *padmāsana* had begun from this period or from a still earlier period.

Of all the subsidiary details of this remarkable Naṭeśa the *prabhāvaḷi* is the most interesting. Obviously its form is quite dissimilar to that of any other Naṭeśa examined so far, with the exception of Okkūr Naṭeśa. In the latter the *prabhā* is simpler and less refined whereas here, like the rest of the figure, it is also worked in an extremely tasteful manner. Like its prototype, it is slightly slanting to the left. The frame of the *prabhā* is like an inflated tube without any grooves incised on it. The outer fringe of it has flames, and the flame at the crest of the *prabhā*, divides them into two series. The series on the left side of Naṭeśa consists of nine flames while that on the opposite side has only eight flames and here the number nine is, probably, made up by adding to the series the top-most flame which is larger than the other flames. Each small flame has only three tongues and its form is slightly more evolved than that of the flames of the Okkūr Naṭeśa. The bottom of these flames is thick and shows only a slight contraction. The wavy form of each of the tongues has received greater emphasis. The top-most flame has five tongues each delineated in a beautiful wave form. The shape of the entire flame is splendid and the conception of the *prabhā* as a whole is itself grand and its execution beautiful. Being an artistic piece of a high order, its presence not only fits the Naṭeśa admirably but also adds greatly to its special charm.

The figure together with the *padmāsana* is cast separately and it is placed on a *bhadrāsana* which is in the same style as the *bhadrāsana* of the Somāskanda.[1]

[1] The *bhadrāsana* of the Okkūr Naṭeśa is missing. Here it is present. In the Naṭeśas of subsequent periods also this *āsana* is usually separate. But upto about 1070 A.D. the *padmāsana* is oval in shape and the *bhadrāsana* is consequently elongate while in the Naṭeśas belonging to periods after about 1100 A.D. or so, the *padmāsana* is, as a rule, circular, and the *bhadrāsana*, wherever present, has a square shape.

The importance of this figure would, by now, have been known. It has set a standard in several respects for Naṭeśas produced during subsequent periods. While dealing with the Okkūr Naṭeśa we said that it was one of the earliest bronze Naṭeśas in the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* pose although in it the theme has not been carried to its logical conclusion. The Naṭeśa under discussion being a perfect example, shows that the *sthapatis* belonging to the last phase of the rule of Parāntaka I mastered the theme. It was but proper that this significant achievement was made in the home area of this king who was not only a great *Śiva-bhakta* but an ardent devotee of Lord Naṭeśa of Chidambaram and one who is credited with having, for the first time, provided the roofs of the shrine of Naṭeśa at Chidambaram with copper-gilt tiles.

The details of the Somāskanda and the Naṭeśa are such that they may be assigned to about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 94 The Gaṇeśa figure stands in *ābhaṅga* posture. The elephant head is apparently naturalistic. This is remarkably borne out by the beautiful ears, the tusk and the depressions on either side of the forehead. The two elevations on the head too are deftly executed. There is a short *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of fine workmanship on the head. It is decorated with *ratna-paṭṭas* and tassels. As required by the *Āgamas*, the tusk on the right side is broken. The eyes are small and life-like. Unlike the great majority of Gaṇeśas of Tamiḻ-nāḍ, especially of the Choḻa country, in which the trunk is curving to the left side and is engaged in touching the *modaka* (sweet-meat) kept on the palm of the lower left hand, here the tip of the trunk curves to the right and carries, on its nostrils, a ball-like thing which stands for the *modaka*. Examples of Gaṇeśa where the trunk turns to right are called Valampuri-Gaṇeśas[1]. The head, as required by the theme, is small, and necklets, probably of the type found in the figures of the Somāskanda group, are seen here. A thick *yajñopavīta* is seen on the body, the *udara-bandha* is also thick and its knot is simple. The torso is moulded in an interesting manner as required by the subject. The belly is really like a pot and answers correctly the name *Lambodara* of the deity. But, it is noteworthy, that the lines of the sides of the torso are characteristically rhythmic and flow in a smooth and beautiful manner. The part between the shoulders is narrow; but the shoulders are stout. A long curly strand of hair decked with flowers is seen on either shoulder. Probably there is the characteristic pendant on the right shoulder. The arms are modelled short and stout. But the treatment of the elbows and the fingers is exquisite. Angularities are as far as possible avoided. The upper arms spring from the elbows of the lower arms. The upper right

1 A survey of early temples, both rock-cut and structural, of Tamiḻ-nāḍ has brought out the fact that a majority of early Gaṇeśas occurring in these temples of all the regions *viz.*, *Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam*, *Choḻa-maṇḍalam* and *Pāṇḍi-maṇḍalam* are usually of the *Valampuri* type, and that this type continued for a longer time in *Pāṇḍi-maṇḍalam*.

hand holds a goad which is simple in style; and the opposite hand holds the broken tusk while the corresponding left hand holds a ball of sweetmeat. Beautiful *nāga-valaya* type of armlets are seen on the arms and a pair of simple *valayas* is seen on each wrist.

The legs are short but beautifully modelled. The right leg is firmly planted and the left leg is slightly bent which makes the figure stand in *ābhaṅga* posture. The loin-cloth is simple and the waist-bands are not prominent. No other decoration seems to be present. The small end of the cloth hanging between the thighs is noteworthy. A finely worked *pādasara* is seen on each foot. Interestingly, neither bows nor hanging ends of any kind are seen on either side. This seems to be a characteristic of early bronzes of Gaṇeśa because in later Gaṇeśas they are almost invariably present.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands is akin in style to that of the *padmāsana* of Naṭeśa, discussed above. The *bhadrāsana*, however, is very simple and does not possess any mouldings. On account of the similarity of workmanship that exists between this and the above two bronzes from the same place this figure also may be dated to the same period.

It is not known if Gaṇeśa bronzes were produced in earlier periods. Anyway this is the first example that we have come across and it is a remarkable specimen of its kind.

The Naṭeśa from Āṇaikkuḍi in the Tanjore District unearthed recently is a remarkable specimen. Its details such as the high *jaṭā-makuṭa* with prominent serpent and *Dātura* flower, but without the whirling *jaṭās*, the *yajñopavīta*, the fire in a receptacle held in the upper arm and the poses of the lower left arm and the lower left leg are all interesting. Though the long whirling locks of hair are absent, short beautifully twisted ones are seen on the right side and similar twisted strands of hair are probably present on the other side also. The ear ornaments are simple. The modelling of the torso and the limbs is superb and the fingers are treated in a delicate manner. The figure of Apasmāra Purusha is present but it is very small. The facial features are rather sharp and this factor is indicative of its position after the Śivapuram Naṭeśa (Fig. 93) although the latter, in so far as the mode of dance is concerned, may appear to be more evolved. Besides, the props of the *prabhā* are peculiar to this bronze and it is because of the fact that space between them is restricted that the free movement of the figure seems to have suffered to some extent. Nevertheless there is great force in the delineation of the dance and this is enhanced by the expression of wonder in the face. The modelling of the figure is splendid. Fig. 95

The bronzes representing Rāma (ht. 112 *cm*), Sītā (ht. 82 *cm*), Lakshmaṇa (ht. 95 *cm*) and Hanumān (ht. 58 *cm*) (Fig. 98), from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr, might Fig. 96

be taken up for study next. An admirable and succinct account of these bronzes has been given by the learned authors of the *Catalogue*.[1] We have only to add a few more particulars to their description in order to draw the attention of the readers to the special features of these bronzes as distinguished from similar features of other representations of the same theme or those of themes similar to this, belonging to earlier and later periods.

The *keśa-bandha* of Lakshmaṇa is almost like that of Śiva or Pārvatī of the Vṛishabhavāhana group from Taṇḍantoṭṭam or of Śiva of the Somāskanda from Śivapuram, but here it is more refined. The *siṁha-mukha* clasps of both Rāma and Lakshmaṇa are very similar to those of Vṛishabhavāhana and Vishṇu from Tiruveṇkāḍu to be discussed below. The wave-over-wave form of treatment of the lower garment of Rāma and Sītā is obviously similar to that of Śivapuram bronzes. The garment of Lakshmaṇa and Hanumān show wheel or *pushpa* designs like those of Kadri bronzes (Figs. 102, 103). Above all, the *padmāsanas*, except that of Hanumān, are undoubtedly derived from the *padmāsanas* of the Buddha from Nāgappaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 58) and of the bronzes of the Rāma group of Paruttiyūr (Fig. 90). The presence of a pair of anklets in the Sītā, is apparently indicative of the fact that the traditions of art of this period began to include such items also which in the *devīs* of Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr, to be discussed below, are seen to have reached a further stage of development. In this Sītā, too, there is no median loop of the waist-band. The tassels and festoons have probably been derived from those of the Sītā from Paruttiyūr. Other minor but novel details that distinguish this Sītā are the *dhammilla* headdress decorated with flowers, curls of hair (*kuṭila-kuntalas*) that fall over the forehead, which are obviously more developed than those of the other Sītā, the simple knot that binds the corss-bands (*channavīra*) at the back and the large *valaya* or *kaṅkaṇa*, with projecting pieces at its top, of the right wrist.

A word about the pendant on the shoulder becomes necessary here. It is seen on the right shoulder of all figures including the Sītā while it is seen on both shoulders in the case of the bronzes representing the consorts of Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr to be discussed below. Similarly, the pendent ornament is present at the back of all the four figures of this Rāma set, but it is absent from all the three figures of the Sirupaṇaiyūr Śrīnivāsa group. Moreover the size of each of the figures, as given above, is considerable and none of the bronzes examined so far come anywhere near these in this respect. But the bronzes from Kadri are larger and this fact suggests that making metal images of such dimensions was also a special feature of the school of Parāntaka I.

Fig. 97 The views of the back side of these gems of bronzes reveal their glory in a more telling manner than their front views. A glance at them shows at once that it is

1 See pp. 79-80 for Rāma, Sītā, and Lakshmaṇa, and p. 95 for Hanumān.

in the treatment of the headdress of these bronzes that the *sthapati* has lavished all his attention, care and talents. The beautifully tapering conical *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of Rāma is effectively set against the lightly built *śiraś-cakra* of surpassing elegance, simulating a full-blown flower. The *śiraś-cakra* of Lakshmaṇa is not present. But the dressing of his *keśa-bandha* into three horizontal tiers of curly hair in the middle, with a wide space below and above, is interesting. Being an artist, apparently of an inspired order, the *sthapati* has chosen to fill up the space at the top of the headdress, by a flower design of exquisite beauty. It is the *dhammilla* headdress of Sītā that defeats any comparison. The long hair is twisted in the *ekaveṇī* fashion and is wound in the manner of a bun and is bound by a broad ribbon in the middle. In the shallow space thus formed are seen beautiful flower designs as well as curls of hair arranged in concentric circles.

The treatment of the other interesting detail of the bronzes, namely, the hair that hangs on the back, is again fine. The pendent ornament is very prominent in the three bronzes and it does not hang low. In the Hanumān figure it is subdued and hangs lower than in other three pieces. The additional detail of *channavīra* seen in the Lakshmaṇa figure is simple. The *vaikaksha* of Sītā is, on the other hand, elaborate as it shows a big knot in the middle with a tassel hanging from it. Moreover, this figure shows festoon and tassels hanging from the sashes on this side also. Fig. 98

That the modelling of all the four figures is superb is shown by the way their hips, buttocks and the limbs are done. In this connection the treatment of Sītā's back is noteworthy as it is especially life-like. The slight flexions of the three bronzes suggest a gentle motion in them, which adds greatly to their exquisite workmanship.

On account of these special features, these marvellous works of art may be considered to have been the products of the period when the power of Parāntaka I reached its zenith, and they may consequently be assigned to the beginning of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

The bronze group representing Śrīnivāsa with Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī from Sirupaṇaiyūr[1] requires to be placed somewhere about this period on grounds of style. The chief reasons are the prominent elbow ornament of the *devīs*, simple conch and discus of Śrīnivāsa, the striped lower garment of Śrīnivāsa and Śrīdevī, girdle of Śrīnivāsa without the *simha-mukha* knot, the loop-less waist-bands of the *devīs*, the *padmāsanas* of all the three figures with naturalistically worked petals and above all the characteristic modelling of Śrīnivāsa with majestic torso but with somewhat disproportionate legs as well as the slender and beautiful modelling of the *devīs*. The comparatively small size of the group possessing such important details may also be taken as indicative of its early date. Fig. 99

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. III, Fig. 1.

The authors of the *Catalogue* have drawn our attention to the unmistakably early characteristics of the bronzes of this group in their description of these figures given on pp. 69-70.

This description also requires further particulars for its completion. For instance such important details as the *Śrīvatsa* mark on the right chest of Śrīnivāsa, absence of *simha-mukha* on the waist-band of the same figure, the early form of *śiraś-cakras* found in the *devīs* (the *śiraś-cakra* of the *deva* being absent) and the simple but beautiful *padmāsanas* of all the three are not mentioned either in the description or in the discussion of these images on pp. 25—30 of the *Catalogue* referred to above. So, the figures are examined again here in detail for ascertaining their importance and chronological position.

This is the first set of Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa with consorts to be noticed here. The torso of this Śrīnivāsa somewhat resembles that of Vishṇu (Fig. 30) from Peruntoṭṭam now in the Tanjore Art Gallery noticed above on pp. 49 ff., and its drapery is apparently a derivative from that of vishṇu No. 2 (Fig. 25) of the *Catalogue*. The *kirīṭa-makuṭa* is in greater relief than that of Vishṇu to be noticed below. But its details are certainly more evolved than those of Vishṇus discussed already. An important feature of the *makuṭa* is that it rests on the head far beyond the *paṭṭa* that goes round the top of the forehead. In the other Vishṇu images, except the one from Śrīnivāsanallūr,[1] the *makuṭas* are not seen much behind.

The face is round and chubby and the features are distinct. Simple fleshy nose, almond-like eyes, naturalistic eye-brows, tender lips beaming with subtle smile and low-hanging ears are especially noteworthy. Beautiful *makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears. Two *kaṇṭhīs* adorn the neck, of which the upper one is thick and simple while the lower one is broad and shows buds of jasmine attached to it. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded and its workmanship is simple. The usual knot over the chest is here also of double-lotus form and shows a fine projecting tie. The manner of showing the three strands that go over the shoulder is novel and interesting. The treatment of their lower portion is also certainly interesting. For, the upper strand which is usually short and used to be shown as going above the *udara-bandha*, is here shown starting from the *udara-bandha* and hanging far below that band and its end almost touches the hem of the garment on the waist. The middle strand runs still lower. The lower-most strand bifurcates from the knot itself, hangs vertically down and goes under the garment. It is seen again over the ankle of the right foot and goes behind, also through the garment, to unite with the other strands at about the centre of the back. The *udara-bandha* is simple with an incised groove in the centre.

[1] *Catalogue*, 70, Pl. IV, Fig. 1.

The torso is modelled like a cylinder and it seems to be in the style of a slightly earlier time. But the less satisfactory manner in which the shoulders and the chest are treated is one of the reasons for assigning it to the school of Parāntaka I. There is a small mole-like projection on the right chest. Unlike the triangular mole of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) here it looks like the symbol for *Śrīvatsa* representing Śrī or Lakshmī with indistinguishable features. It may be mentioned here that no such mark was present in the Vishṇu No. 2 (Fig. 25) of the *Catalogue* although in some of the earlier Vishṇus it was seen. In a number of later Vishṇus this form of *Śrīvatsa* is present but there it is more developed and pronounced. Interestingly the shoulder-pendant does not seem to be present in the Śrīnivāsa.

The manner of joining the arms to the shoulders is characteristic of this period. And their less satisfactory modelling as evident from the uniform thickness of both the fore and upper-parts of them as well as the uncouth manner of showing the attachment of the upper arms to the elbows of the lower arms proves this. Nevertheless there is no doubt about the fact that the *sthapati* was well versed in the traditions of the art, which is displayed by the characteristic *keyūras* and *valayas*. That this is so, is more significantly borne out by the extreme simplicity of style of the conch and discus held in the upper left and right hands respectively. In both the emblems, there are only three flames, each with not more than three tongues, although this detail is not very clearly seen here. It may be remembered here that in the treatment of the flames of the same emblems of Vishṇu No. 2 of the *Catalogue* (Fig. 25) discussed above, was also noticed a certain amount of doubtfulness. In later figures the flames become clearer, as for example in the Vishṇu (Fig. 177) from Paruttiyūr. Another interesting thing is that there is apparently no suggestion of a flame at the bottom points of the emblems of this figure. The design and execution of these two emblems may be seen to become gradually ornate in the Vishṇus of subsequent periods. The other arms are in *abhaya* and *kaṭy-avalambita* poses.

The lower garment which, as we have stated while discussing the earlier Vishṇus, is a *pītāmbara*, shows close parallel lines of which the one occurring between two simpler lines shows small dots on it. It may be mentioned here, for the sake of comparison, that the garment of the Vishṇu No. 2 (Fig. 25) of the Madras Museum, discussed on pp. 42 ff., shows a less developed form of these lines. Another important detail of the garment of this figure is that the bows at the sides are simple and there is only one hanging end. On the other hand in the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) and Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 154) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr to be discussed below, these details show further developments of which the two hanging ends shown one over the other are specially noteworthy. The treatment of the waist-band is still more interesting because not only is there not

any representation of *simha-mukha* on its knot but the bow-like hanging ends of it and the median loop are of simple workmanship. Above all there are only two monoliform tassels hanging from the lower waist-band. That these are developed further in the case of the other two bronzes referred to above will be obvious from a glance at them.

Fig. 100 At the back though the *makuṭa* and other details are clearly seen in the god, the informative *śiraś-cakra* is missing. But the curly strands of hair hanging on the back are definitely more advanced in style than those of the Vishṇu No. 2 of the *Catalogue* (Fig. 25) described above. Moreover, an interesting additional detail is seen here for the first time. It is the ring-like continuation of one of the *kaṇṭhīs* which is in the nature of enclosing the strands of hair referred to above. This feature will be seen in such other figures as Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakāḍu (Fig. 109), Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 154) and Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) to be discussed below. But the stage of development of this detail here may be seen to be comparatively earlier than that of the same detail met with in the other figures. The pendent ornament hanging from the neck is noteworthy. The *yajñopavīta*, as usual, shows the joining of the longer strand at the middle of the back. The tucked-up end of the cloth in the middle of the waist is also noteworthy. The treatment of the feet is like that of the hands. But the *padmāsana* on which the figure stands is very interesting. There are the two distinct divisions, the upper and the lower courses, of petals. The petals of the lower course are like those of the *padmāsanas* of figures mentioned above. But the petals of the upper course are comparatively small and the space between two of them, too, is considerable and it is occupied by the intermediate petals. Even this detail is developed in the other two figures.

Coming to the two *devī* figures, they are modelled in a slender and graceful manner and their decorative details are not only restrained but are appropriate. Just as there exists a difference in the treatment of the faces of Śiva and Pārvatī figures of some of the Śiva groups discussed above, obviously here also there is difference in the treatment of the faces of the *devīs* and *deva*.

Between the *karaṇḍa-makuṭas* of the *devīs* there is difference, that of Bhūdevī shows its *karaṇḍas* more clearly topped by pointed bud-like part while that of Śrīdevī is less clear and its *karaṇḍas* are broader and more squat, its finial being slightly blunted. It may be mentioned here that the space between the fillet and the base of the *makuṭa* is not much; nor does the fillet project so sharply as do the fillets of the *devīs* of the Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 154) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr to be discussed below.

Both of them wear a pair of necklets. There is also a thread with a small indistinguishable projecting ornament (probably *māṅgalya-sūtra*) tied closely to the neck. These are simple. Both wear a *channavīra* with two knots, one above and one below the

breasts. From these knots proceeds on either side a thread which is seen to join another knot at the back. The lower knot shows a third thread hanging between the two others.

The torsos of both the figures are modelled in an exquisite manner and the excellence of workmanship is particularly noticeable in the torso of Bhūdevī. Both of them stand now in the graceful *tri-bhaṅga* posture to emphasise which the lines of either side have been swayed in a beautiful rhythmic fashion. The breasts are full and sensuous, and the breasts of Śrīdevī are covered by the characteristic band namely *kuca-bandha*. A series of curly strands of hair of simple workmanship falls on either shoulder of both the figures. Besides, a thin pendant is present on either shoulder of both the figures. All along, this ornament was noticed on the right shoulder of a bronze, so its presence on both shoulders here is an innovation. This practice seems to have come into vogue only now. It is met with in later bronzes such as Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) and Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 103) from Kadri.

The arms of these figures are somewhat shorter than those of the female figures noticed till now. But their treatment is fine. The bend noticed in the arms, in *lola* pose, of these figures, is in the style of the figures in bronze of the period. On the arms are seen *keyūra* of a simpler type. But the most interesting decorative piece of these figures is the elbow ornament with a prominent projecting piece. A series of bangles is seen on each wrist and rings on the fingers.

The draperies of the figures are worked like that of Śrīnivāsa but the lines are not pronounced here. There is an interesting difference seen between the ornamentations of the draperies of these figures. While that of Śrīdevī shows only empty space between two sets of parallel lines, the drapery of Bhūdevī has beautiful flower patterns in that. Already in the Śiva of Somāskanda from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 36) and the Pārvatī of the Vṛishabhavāhana group (Fig. 69) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam as well as in the Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi Naṭeśa (Fig. 54) floral designs have been met with. But in those cases, the designs are apparently in a formative stage. But here they have become almost standardised although this appears to have been perfected at a slightly later period only. These patterns have been rubbed off owing probably to the fact that the image was in use for a long time or due to corrosion. The end of the garment that hangs between the legs is simple just like that of earlier female figures and it is seen attached to the right leg in Śrīdevī and to the left leg in Bhūdevī. The treatment of this detail as well as of the hems of the draperies, just above the ankle is graceful.

As has been said above, the girdles of both the figures are interesting because of their simple workmanship. The knots and the median loop are both conspicuous by

their absence here while they are pronounced in the *devīs* of the other figures referred to above. This, coupled with the presence of only one or two broad monoliform tassels on the thighs makes the figures undoubtedly earlier than the other *devīs*. Moreover, a long pearly string is seen hanging beautifully in a curved manner on the thighs, a feature which shows further development in the two *devī* figures.

The interesting detail at the back of these figures is the *śiraś-cakra*. It is not bounded by a circular rim. So its periphery is scalloped. This type of *śiraś-cakra* is an ancient one of which an example belonging to an immediately preceding period is met with in the Tripurasundarī (Fig. 65) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam. The *devīs* of the other groups with which we have been comparing this group, show a developed *śiraś-cakra* with its periphery bound by a rim except in the case of Śrīdevī of Vishṇu (Fig. 124) from Peruntoṭṭam where it is not bounded. In spite of this the workmanship of the latter Śrīdevī's *śiraś-cakra* is undoubtedly more evolved than that of the *śiraś-cakra* of the figures under discussion. As has been said above, it seems that some ancient motifs are usually found repeated throughout the ages; but in their depiction during the several periods, only their basic idea seems to have been preserved while their execution shows unmistakably the imprints of the traditions of art as obtained in each of the periods. The *śiraś-cakra* of the Śrīdevī from Peruntoṭṭam is an instance in point. A pair of anklets and a *pādasara* are seen on the feet of each of the *devīs*.

The locks of hair with twisted ends hanging on the back of the *devīs* are realistic. Just as in Śrīnivāsa, in Śrīdevī, too, the continuation of a necklet is seen as though serving as border for the hair while it is absent in the Bhūdevī. But here this ring-like piece is not so prominent as in the *devīs* from Peruntoṭṭam. In both, the pendent ornament is seen below the hair, depicted in a prominent manner; and the *channavīra* is seen to be a cross-band at the back, without any tassel hanging from the knot.

An interesting feature met with at the back of the Śrīdevī is the bands coming over either shoulder and connected to a horizontal band at about the middle of the back. The vertical bands are seen tied to the *kuca-bandha* in front. This bodice-like pattern is a novel decoration in this figure and it does not seem to be repeated in any other figure.

Coming to the *āsanas* of the *devīs*, they, too, are interesting. While the petals of the lotus of the *āsana* of Śrīnivāsa are naturalistic, the petals of the *padmāsana* of these *devīs* are very simple in style and do not seem to have been given so much attention. In this respect, too, there is no agreement between this set and the other two sets namely Vishṇu (Fig. 123) with consorts from Peruntoṭṭam and Śrīnivāsa with consorts from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 154). In the present figures the tips of the petals are not emphasised. While the Śrīdevī's pedestal makes a scalloped circle, that of Bhūdevī's makes a perfect circle.

As regards the date of this group, though the authors of the *Catalogue* have considered it to be a specimen of the Choḷa type, they have not assigned it to any definite period. That they were struck by the unusual simplicity of workmanship of this group the style of which is earlier than that of the other two groups, is clear from their statement:[1] "A careful examination of the *devīs* of Śrīnivāsa No. 1, (*i.e.*, the *deva* under discussion)[2] reveals similar differences in the form of the respective *makuṭas*; but the images of this set are smaller and less well finished; and, whether for this reason or because of *the earlier date to which they should probably be assigned*,[3] the differences are scarcely noticeable and acquire significance only by reason of their resemblance, so far as they go, to those found between the *devīs* of Vishṇu No. 1 and Śrīnivāsa No. 2." The last two figures are those from Peruntoṭṭam and Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr respectively, referred to above several times. In spite of this awareness on the part of the authors of the *Catalogue*, of the antiquity of this group, being very much engrossed in the appreciation of the Vishṇu group from Peruntoṭṭam they have given the place of honour to that group which as will be shown below is later than the group under discussion. From the stage of development of the details of this group of bronzes, we believe that this set might well belong to the early part of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Now we shall pass on to the three bronzes found in the temple of Mañjunātha at Kadri, a suburb of Mangalore. They are interesting from the points of view of history, iconography and art.

One of them represents a seated Buddha in the *vyākhyāna* (teaching attitude) and the other two represent each a subsidiary deity of the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon. Of the latter two bronzes, one is single-faced and four-armed and the other is three-faced and six-armed. All the three are in the same style which is strikingly similar to that of several bronzes belonging to the Choḷa country discussed above especially to the bronzes of the Rāma set from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr. This stylistic affinity alone would have enabled one to conclude that these were made by *sthapatis* well versed in the traditions of the art of bronzes as obtained in the Choḷa country; or, if permitted to go a step further, by a *sthapati* of the Choḷa country itself. Fortunately the predicament that would have been caused by these inferences has been to a great extent obviated by a very valuable piece of internal evidence. It is the palaeography of the inscription found on the pedestal of the three-faced figure. The inscription is in Sanskrit verse and records the installation of the idol by an Ālūpa king. Its meaning is as follows:[4]

1 *Catalogue*, p. 26.
2 Words within brackets are ours.
3 Italicised by us.
4 B. A. Saletore, *History of Karnāṭaka*, Vol. I, p. 94.

"That he was a sun to the lotus of the Lunar race, One with an effulgent body, One with his chest rubbed with saffron from the breast of Lakshmī the State.....such an Ālūpendra ruler named Kundavarma was equal to Karṇa in liberality, to Arjuna in valour, to Indra in wealth, and to Bṛihaspati in wisdom. And (he was also) virtuous. He was like a bee at the lotus feet of Bālacandra Śikhāmaṇi. When 4068 years (and) nine months had passed in the Kaliyuga, and Jupiter was in Kanyā in the Rohiṇī *nakshatra* on the afternoon (of the day) in an auspicious moment, (he) set up the image of god Lokeśvara in the beautiful *vihāra* of Kadarikā".

The most important information that we derive from this inscription is the date given in Kali era which works out to "January 13th, 968 A.D."[1] As has been mentioned already, rarely do metal images bear inscriptions and images containing dated inscriptions are still rarer. Only one other bronze image is known so far to possess a dated inscription. It is the Naṭeśa from Belūr (*Catalogue*, p. 112, plate XVI, Fig. 2) and the date in it, given in the Kali era, works out to 1510 A.D. But here is a bronze dating from nearly five and a half centuries earlier, with the date expressed in the same Kali era. It, therefore, becomes an important landmark in the history of the art of bronzes in South India. Being in the same style, the other two bronzes of this group, too, are equally important as we may reasonably suppose them to be the works of the same *sthapati* or at any rate of the same date.

Regarding the source of the traditions of art exemplified by them, the inscription affords a clue. No doubt the inscribed image was arranged to be set up by an Ālūpa king. But the question arises whether he was a completely independent ruler or he owed allegiance to any suzerain. There is no conclusive evidence to prove this, one way or the other. At this juncture it is very interesting to note that the inscription is written in beautiful Grantha characters in which several inscriptions dated to about the 10th-11th centuries A.D., belonging to Tamil-nāḍ are written. Can this piece of evidence be taken to give us any historical significance? We find that it does seem to give a clue to the active contact that existed between Tulu-nāḍ and Tamil-nāḍ in the 10th century A.D. It is wellk-nown that a great majority of the inscriptions belonging to South Kanara District are written in Old Kannaḍa script. In a few early inscriptions, however, the first few lines containing Sanskrit verses are witten in the Grantha script.[2] In the present case the entire inscription is written in Sanskrit verse and in the Grantha script that is distinctly Tamilian in character. We, therefore, infer that either the ruler was subjected to the Choḷa power as a result of which he adopted the script of the country of his sovereign for writing his inscriptions or there were at Mangalore (ancient

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] N. Lakshmīnarayana Rao, *Talaḍgere Inscription* in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIX; p. 203.

Maṅgaḷāpura) some families of Tamilian *sthapatis*, a descendant of one of which was responsible for the creation of these bronzes. It is known that since the time of Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.) the Choḷa power began to be felt all over South India and it was further extended during the time of Rājarāja I (985-1014 A.D.), the Choḷa kings coming in between them contributing their share in this endeavour. Perhaps in the wake of the march of some of these kings or princes, into Tuḷu-nāḍ, some master *sthapatis* from Tamil-nāḍ went and settled there, and probably to them we owe the bronzes. We have already said above that their style is the one in which hundreds of bronzes of Tamil-nāḍ belonging to this period are made; and further no other specimen of this type is reported from any other place in Tuḷu-nāḍ. Hence it is not unreasonable to suppose that these bronzes are Choḷa or of Choḷa type. As we have stated at the beginning of this chapter, that the bronzes belonging to the period from 907 A.D. to the accession of Rājarāja I (985 A.D.) may be said to belong to the school designated by us as the school of Parāntaka I, these may also be considered as examples of that school. Though we have dealt with them in another place[1] here we shall examine them in greater detail.

Of the three bronzes, the Buddha[2] is about 60 *cm* high. It is seated in the *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*. Curls of hair cover the head and there is a prominent *jvālā* (flame) in the centre. It has three tongues worked in a simple manner. But its advanced stage of development, compared to the *jvālā* on the head of the large standing Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 58) discussed abve, is apparent. The face is roundish. The half-closed eyes and the gentle smile are expressive of divine contemplation, a characteristic which is rendered with consummate skill and rare understanding. The ear-lobes are comparatively short which is a characteristic of bronzes of this period. The neck is normal and there are traces of lines suggesting *trivalī*. Fig. 101

The modelling of the torso suggests strength, not grace as in the case of the Buddha images from Borobudur, Java, and the seated Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 179) to be discussed below. While the lines of the standing Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 58) are full of rhythm, in this figure they seem to have developed some amount of tension. The sharp groove round the waist, being in the nature of bounding the lines of the sides, seems to have contributed to this quality. The treatment of the shoulders rather as a square is obviously akin to that of Somāskanda from Sorakkuḍi (Fig. 86) but here it appears to be a little stiff. In this respect it possesses some affinity to the Bhikshāṭana-mūrti from Tirunāmanallūr (Fig. 104). Moreover, here the angularities of the elbows are emphasised. The right hand is in *vyākhyāna-mudrā* and the left hand is placed on

[1] A. Aiyappan and P. R. Srinivasan, *Story of Buddhism with special reference to South India*, pp. 83-84.
[2] *Ibid.*, Frontispiece.

the lap, palm facing up. Representations of the Buddha in the teaching pose is very rare and this bronze is therefore very important in this respect. The rendering of the fingers falls short of the quality of the same feature met with not only in the large standing Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam but also in a number of other bronzes examined after that. This is mainly due to the fact that the entire figure is moulded rather heavy, which is reflected by the fingers also.

The draperies are diaphanous but the hem of the upper garment is prominently seen, in the *yajñopavīta* fashion, on the chest. The piece of cloth seen on the left shoulder, unlike that of the Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam discussed above, has grooves incised on it representing probably its borders.

In the treatment of the legs too a certain amount of angularity and stiffness is apparent as is evidenced by almost the straight line from the right hip to the right knee, which is devoid of flow and consequently rhythm. This feature is also patent from the manner in which the knee-caps are worked.

Notwithstanding these developed features its proportions and rare pose make it a splendid example of its kind.

A spike is seen to the right of the Buddha and there must be another on the opposite side. They are intended to receive a *prabhāvaḷi*.

The remaining two figures are more interesting than the Buddha on account of their iconographical details as well as their artistic qualities. Elsewhere[1] we have tried to identify them, although we feel that our identification is purely tentative and may be held to be valid till the contrary is proved. According to our identification, the three-faced, six-armed figure with the inscription mentioned above, which is by far the most impressive of the three, represents Hālāhala Lokeśvara, and the two-armed figure represents Lokanātha Avalokiteśvara.

Fig. 102 While the Buddha figure stands for all that is sublime in nature, the Hālāhala Lokeśvara seems to represent all that is dynamic in nature. It is about 120 *cm* high. It is seated in the *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*. There is a *jaṭā-makuṭa* of exquisite workmanship over each of the three heads. The most interesting detail met with on the *makuṭa* is a Dhyānī Buddha shown seated within an arch having a single cusp in front. A *ratna-paṭṭa* goes round the head. Characteristically, the depression between the fillet and the base of the *makuṭa* is deep. The face is squarish and resembles that of Bhikshāṭana from Tirunāmanallūr of this period. This feature of the face is seen to be a special characteristic of bronzes of the subsequent periods. It is hardly necessary to

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 85-92, Pls. XII and XIII.

state that the features of the face are extremely well finished. The eyes are marked by a depression which is almond-shaped. That the nose has become somewhat sharp is clear. This is another characteristic which marks the bronzes of the later periods. The lips are thick and beautiful. The treatment of the ear-lobes is also noteworthy because while they are long and hanging low in bronzes of earlier periods, in this instance they are short and somewhat stylistic. The expression of the face suggests supreme joy. There is a third eye on the forehead of the front face. The other two faces also probably have this feature. The profile of the other faces shows clearly the sharpness of the nose and the thickness of the lips as well as the chubbiness of the whole face.

The neck is short. Two beautifully worked *kaṇṭhīs* are seen on the neck. Interestingly, there exists considerable space between them, in which respect it anticipates the Bhikshāṭana from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig 175), although the workmanship of the necklets in the latter is different. A *vastra-yajñopavīta* is seen on the body and it has a beautiful knot on the chest from which hangs down an end of the cloth of which the tip is worked in a very charming wave pattern. It may be noted here that this *yajñopavīta* is short and is seen to go behind even from the level of the stomach. The torso is beautifully worked but the remarks offered in respect of the same feature of the Buddha are applicable to some extent to this bronze also. The shoulders are however less stiff than they are in the Buddha. It is noteworthy that only one long lock of hair is seen hanging on each shoulder. No other ornament adorns it. The absence in this figure of the pendent ornament usually seen in the bronzes of this period and its presence on either shoulder of the four-armed figure to be noticed below of this group, shows that it is not unusual to find a few bronzes without it. At the junction of the shoulders and the arms an interesting detail is found. It is the little fold of the muscle. In no other bronze noticed so far, was this detail present. It is an innovation probably intended to enhance the beauty of the figure. But it seems to us to be supreſluous and the beauty of the bronze would not have been impaired had this not been shown. It must be mentioned here that it is on such unimportant details that the *sthapatis* of later periods seem to have bestowed greater attention than to the essential elements of modelling, proportions etc. of the bronze itself. Can it be said that a beginning of decadence of the artistic traditions is what is indicated by this little detail?

Though the proportions of the figure are almost perfect, yet the arms seem to be somewhat short and stout, not slender and graceful. The *keyūra* is worked like a floral design. Its knot is seen distinctly on the outside of the arm. No elbow ornament is present. Each of the subsidiary arms is seen to spring up from the elbow of the previous

arm, in the characteristic manner of the period, and the angularity produced by this treatment is sharper than that of the Buddha. A *ratna-valaya* is seen on each wrist. The upper right hand holds a beautiful lotus bud. Curiously the middle finger of this hand shows a projecting piece. The middle hand is in *kaṭaka* pose and the lower hand is in *varada-mudrā* with a prominent thing on the palm probably standing for the poison *hālāhala*, as it is in the Vishāpaharaṇa (Fig. 38). Of the three left hands the upper one is in *kaṭaka* pose, the middle one holds a lotus bud by its stalk and the lower one is in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā*.

The treatment of the legs of this figure is apparently better than that of the legs of the Buddha. Its delicacy is known from the beautiful toes and their decoration. The most interesting detail of this part is the garment which is worked not in the usual wave-over-wave form but is shown as even and decorated with beautiful wheel and geometric designs resembling the designs met with in the Lakshmaṇa and the Hanumān from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr. There are two prominent bands on the waist, of which parts are seen on the thighs. The clasp on the waist-band though not worked as a regular *siṁha-mukha* shows a flower design with some of the features of a lion-face, of which the bow-like loops are noteworthy.

The *bhadrāsana* has mouldings and there are spikes to receive the *prabhāvaḷī*. On either side of the sunken portion of the *āsana* is a panel. The panel on the left shows a seated figure in *añjali* (?) attended by a standing figure holding something in his left hand. To the left of the seated figure is a symbol which cannot be satisfactorily made out but it most probably represents a sword kept erect on its hilt. The panel on the right side shows again a seated figure in *añjali* pose with a standing attendant probably a female.[1]

An extremely ornate *prabhāvaḷī* is seen behind the figure. It has the flames on its outer fringe while its inner fringe shows designs of petals. At its top, above the knot made up of addorsed *makara* heads is a small niche with a pointed arch containing a miniature figure of Amitābha. The lower ends of the *prabhā* carved on a horizontal beam show creeper designs of superb workmanship, the two ends of the beam showing each a *makara* head with gaping mouth from which juts out an angelic figure in the attitude of *vismaya* (wonder). Above each of these *makara* heads of the *prabhā* is a standing figure of an attendant. Both the attendants are shown in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose. Behind the head of each attendant, is a simple *prabhā* fringed only on the outside with single-tongued flames of exquisite beauty. Both attendants wear *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* and other ornaments. But while the figure on the left wears a *yajñopavīta*, that on the

[1] These details are not seen in the illustration given here, but they are found in the drawing of the bronze reproduced on Pl. I, Fig. 1, of *Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy* for 1920–21.

right wears a *vaikaksha*. The hands are in *kaṭaka* and *lola* poses, these being reversed between the two figures. On the whole, the workmanship of the attendants is as good as that of the main figure.

Now it is clear that these are the characteristics which distinguish the sculptures in stone and metal of Tamil-nāḍ of the early Choḷa period. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that it is one of the magnificent bronzes of the school of Parāntaka I. Probably this is also one of the biggest of bronzes in the seated posture. On account of the fact that perfection was attained both in technique and in treatment of bronzes during the last phase of this school, the *sthapatis* could manipulate large moulds such as was required for this, with ease, vision and boldness born out of confidence and experience.

The last bronze of this group is the single-faced four-armed figure which we have identified as Lokanātha Avalokiteśvara. It is about 90 *cm* high. Though it seems to be similar to the above discussed Lokeśvara, this similarity is confined only to the treatment. For, this figure shows details which are quite different from those met with in the above figure. Fig. 103

The headdress is similar to that of the previous bronze; and the face is also treated in a like manner. But here the expression suggests seriousness. The ears are long and they bear *makara-kuṇḍalas*. Besides, above the left ear a flower is tucked up. Perhaps the other ear also has a flower like this although that ear is not visible in the illustration. On the neck are three necklaces, the smallest of them being a rosary of beads and the broadest being probably of *ratna*. An interesting *yajñopavīta* with three deep curves in it is seen on the body. Added to the curves, an elongated head of an animal with a pair of long wavy horns is seen just in the place where usually the knot is present. This animal head obviously stands for the deer head which makes this *yajñopavīta* an example of the *kṛishṇājina-yajñopavīta*.[1] Rarely sculptures of South India show this feature; and still rarer are metal figures possessing this type of sacred thread.

The torso is beautiful. The shoulders are normal. A curly strand of hair gracefully hangs on each shoulder together with the pendent ornament. The latter was confined only to the right shoulder in some of the bronzes noticed just prior to this. Its presence on both shoulders has, however, been already noticed in the *devīs* of Śrīnivāsa group from Sirupaṇaiyūr. This bronze is another example illustrating the same tradition. Besides these pendants, an additional ornament is also seen on the shoulder, namely a

1 Similar type of *yajñopavīta* is seen in some Gupta sculptures, *e.g.*, the torso of Bodhisattva from Sāñchi (*The Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 27, Fig. 205), and Bodhisattva Maitreya from Sārnāth, (*ibid.*, Pl. 340, Fig. 206).

looped beaded string. The loop is wide enough to cover a considerable portion of the shoulder. This is seen for the first time here and hence its importance. In the majority of bronzes belonging to subsequent periods, it becomes a regular feature.

Coming to the arms, their workmanship is apparently not so good; it is not like that of the arms of the other two figures. They are not only somewhat disproportionate, but also have become a little more stiff. This feature is emphasised especially in the joints of the arms. The fingers, however, continue to some extent the earlier features of rhythm and suppleness. *Keyūras* of the pronged type are seen on the arms. A noteworthy detail of them is the beautiful *makara* heads shown back to back at the bottom of the decorative piece. A pair of *kaṅkaṇas* is seen on each wrist. Of the four hands the upper right and left hands are in *kaṭaka-mudrā*. The emblems held by these hands are missing. The lower right arm is in *varada* pose with a *maṇi*-like object in the palm. The corresponding left hand is in *vyākhyāna-mudrā* as in the Hālāhala figure.

The moulding of the legs is better than that of the hands and is akin to that of the Hālāhala figure noticed above. The drapery seems to be plain and fine. A number of sashes are seen wound round the waist. The girdle is interesting and shows an extremely well finished *simha-mukha*. A prototype of this has been seen in the Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr. Another noteworthy detail of the drapery is the flowing ends seen one on each side of the waist. The wave pattern in which their tips are done is praiseworthy. On the feet are *pādasaras*.

In spite of certain deficiencies noticed in the modelling of the figure, there is no doubt that this is one of the typical examples of the art of bronzes of the period and one in which the beginning of one or two novel features are met with which is proof positive for the advancement that the art traditions were making then.

The foregoing descriptions of the three bronzes clearly show that these are not merely inspired by the art traditions of the Choḷa country but are perhaps modelled by a Choḷa *sthapati*. Quite interestingly their size is very considerable and, as has been said above, this is also one of the special characteristics of bronzes of this period belonging to the Choḷa country *e.g.*, Rāma group from Vaḍakkupaṇaiyūr. The importance of these bronzes is, therefore, manifold.

Fig. 104 The Bhikshāṭanamūrti from Tirunāmanallūr[1] may be noticed now. The most conspicuous detail in this is the mode of representation of the *jaṭās*. Here the short strands of hair with twisted ends are shown as a regular *maṇḍala* (halo) behind the head with the skull and the serpent shown very prominently on it. The facial features of this figure bear close resemblance to those of the bronzes discussed immediately above. The *kaṭhī* is excessively broad but it nevertheless is treated in a beautiful manner.

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas* (1955), Fig. 74.

Yajñopavīta is of a single strand and shows an elegant knot on the left chest. A broad *udara-bandha* is seen. The serpentine waist-band is wound round the waist once and does not show any looping. The depiction of the hood and the body of the serpent is however fine. The arms are shown in the usual posture. But the way the arms are attached to the shoulder and the treatment of the gestures of hands are interesting. A *nāga-valaya* type of armlet and a simple *valaya* are seen on each arm and wrist respectively. No pendent ornament is seen on the shoulders. The knee-caps are somewhat prominently seen. It may however be mentioned here that the bend of the torso to proper right is a little strained, not natural. In spite of these, the treatment of the figure is on the whole superb and as a study in nude this bronze is perhaps one of the very best of its kind. The back view exemplifies this very well. The workmanship of the *jaṭā-maṇḍala* Fig. 105 with triple-stranded tassel hanging from its top, is noteworthy. The curly strands of hair are not prominent and they have a tendency to become conventionalised. But the pendant is prominent. Further, such details as the armlets, *vāḻī-bandha* and modelling are clearly seen. The gracefulness of the *bhaṅga* is apparent. It may be dated to a slightly later period than that to which the bronzes from Kadri belong.

The Subrahmaṇya bronze from Tiruviḍaikkaḷi.[1] Tanjore District is seen to carry Fig. 106 the traditions of art a step further. Though its style is almost akin to that of Bhikshāṭana discussed above, on account of the difference in the theme, the details of the two bronzes are naturally different.

It is four-armed and stands in the *ati-bhaṅga* pose usually met with in representations of deities suggesting war-like or some such dynamic activity. The front arms are obviously in the posture of holding an arrow and bow. In this respect its affinity to the Kirātamūrti from Tiruveṭkaḷam (Fig. 44) is striking. So, it may be said to represent the aspect of Devasenāpati or Tārakāri.

On the head, a beautiful *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is seen and its affinity to the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr is apparent. Probably a garland has taken the place of the usual broad fillet around the head. Ears hang low but they are empty. The face is slightly ovoid and its features are sharp and expressive of supreme calm. These features are very much similar to those of Naṭeśa from Tiruvaraṅguḷam (Fig. 107) to be noticed below. There is a broad *kaṇṭhī* of the neck. A *channavīra* with a graceful knot is seen in the middle of the chest. Usual *udara-bandha* is present. It is noteworthy that the *yajñopavīta* is conspicuous by its absence. The absence of this, coupled with the presence of the *channavīra* in such *raudra* form of a deity, is noteworthy.

[1] *Ibid.*, Fig. 76.

The torso is moulded in a manner which suggests strength and power, and the swing of the lines of both sides is magnificently rendered. The shoulders and the part between them are done in such a manner as to suggest supreme prowess which is the primary quality of the theme represented by the bronze. While the pendent ornament on the right shoulder was absent from the Bhikshāṭanamūrti, here it is present. It proves that this is one of the characteristic decorative details of bronzes of this period. The arms are also done in a manner suggesting strength. In spite of the angularities seen in their elbows, their workmanship is apparently exquisite. The manner of attachment of the upper left arm is somewhat archaic. There are *nāga-valaya* type of armlets and a pair of thick *valayas* on each wrist. While the front arms are in the poses of holding a bow and an arrow, the upper right hand holds a *śakti* and the corresponding left hand holds a *vajra*. These are the special emblems of the deity. They are shown as sitting lightly on the tips of the first two fingers. This manner of holding the emblems is seen for the first time only in this bronze.

The legs are also apparently well modelled and the lines that enclose their masses are so smoothly flowing as to make the flexions natural. But the emphasis on the right hip seems to be a little too much. Or the bend of the torso seems to have been over-done. Due to one of these reasons–the latter seems to be more probable–there is a slight distortion of the line of the right side of the otherwise exceedingly well-finished bronze. Somewhat a similar treatment is already seen in the Bhikshāṭana from Tirunāmanallūr examined above. The loin-cloth is worked in a simple manner and the loops of the *simha-mukha* knot of the waist-band are similar to those of Rāma from Vaḍakkupaṇaiyūr. The short ends of cloth hanging between the thighs are noteworthy. Neither bows nor ends of cloth are seen on the sides, in which respect this bronze is similar to the same Rāma.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands shows petals of lotus with tips emphasised. A line seems to be engraved along the margin of each petal.

The most interesting detail of this bronze is its *prabhāvaḷi*. The last example of a *prabhā* discussed above is that of Naṭeśa from Śivapuram. Apparently the present *prabhā* is more developed than that. The striking developments noticed here are the slight curving in of the props, near their bottom, the small projection seen along the inside of the *makara*-like motif carved at the base of each prop, the large number of flames of fire and the greater number of tongues met with in some of the flames. It is interesting to note that all the flames, including the one at the crest of the *prabhā*, prominently show only three tongues; but the tongues on either end are bifurcated into two each, thus making each of the flames five-tongued. It is an innovation met with for the first time and this clearly shows the freedom enjoyed by the *sthapati* who produced

this bronze within the *Āgamic* or canonical rules. The depiction of each flame as well as its tongues, if compared with that of the flames of the *prabhā* of Naṭeśa from Śivapuram shows that the flames of this are more developed than those of the latter bronze. The *makara motif* is especially noteworthy because in none of the bronzes with *prabhās* examined so far, this *motif* is found. On the contrary, in many later bronzes *e.g.*, the Naṭeśa from the Big Temple at Tanjore, this *motif* is seen with greater elaboration and in some still later bronzes, it becomes ornate and conventionalised.

Representations of Devasenāpati or Tārakāri form of Subrahmaṇya are rare. This is, therefore, important not only from the point of view of art but also from the point of view of iconography. It may be assigned to the end of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

The Naṭeśa from Tiruvarañgulam[1] now in the National Museum, New Delhi may also be attributed to about this period. Fig. 107

Here four-armed Naṭeśa is performing an ancient and beautiful mode of dance namely *catura-tāṇḍava*. No other representation in bronze of this mode of dance has been met with so far. Besides this unique feature, the treatment of the figure is such as to make it one of the superb works of art. The limbs are slender but graceful; the proportions are perfect, the decorative details are tasteful and above all the rhythm and pose are rendered in a masterly manner and with a rare understanding of the subtleties of the art traditions and the intricacies of the theme.

The crown is almost like that of Naṭeśa from Śivapuram and there is the wide space between the fillet and the base of the crown. Pronged *keyūra*-like ornament is seen conspicuously on it. Probably flowers are shown on either side. *Makara-kuṇḍala* adorns the right ear and *patra-kuṇḍala* the left. As has been said above, the face of this resembles the face of the Devásenāpati discussed above. Three necklets are seen on the neck, the lowermost of them having a few festoons and tassels in the middle. *Yajñopavīta* is simple and the clasp on the left chest is elegant. Interestingly the lowermost strand is shown hanging vertically and getting into the loin-cloth. *Udara-bandha* is interesting in that it shows tassels and festoons hanging from the middle portion. The torso is fine. There are curls of hair on either shoulder but the shoulder ornament is absent. On the arms are seen the *nāga-valaya* type of armlets which we have been meeting with in the bronzes of this period frequently. But the most interesting detail of this figure is the *vāji-bandha* with the prominent projecting piece on the elbows. A pair of *valayas* on each wrist and rings on the fingers are also seen. The upper right hand holds the *ḍamaru*. But the manner of holding it is novel. It seems that a thread is wound round

[1] T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, Pl. LXVI, Fig. 2; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *loc. cit.*, Fig. 67; and C. Sivaramamurti in *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 1 and 2, Pl. XXXIX, Fig. 7.

the *ḍamaru* and its end fastened to the first finger. A more developed stage of this feature is seen only in the Naṭeśas belonging to periods after about 1100 A.D. as for instance the Naṭeśa from Puṅganūr (Fig. 238) to be discussed below. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and on its fore-arm is shown a serpent. The upper left arm is as usual stretched out and in its palm is placed a three-pronged flame, the central prong being in the shape of an inverted question mark as in the case of the Naṭeśa from Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi (Fig. 54). Except in the latter, in all other Naṭeśas examined above, the flame is shown in a small cup but in the Naṭeśas to be examined below, the cup is dispensed with. This feature of the Naṭeśa under study is another indicator for its position here. The lower right arm is in the usual *gaja-hasta* posture. But in the treatment of this arm the *sthapati* seems to have faltered to a small extent. Hence its rhythm is not so beautiful as it ought to be.

With the charming *catura* posture in which they are disposed the legs form the most beautiful part of this figure. Their modelling is smooth, slender, and delicate, in fact they are treated with consummate skill. Though there seems to be a great affinity, in this respect, between this Naṭeśa and the Naṭeśa from Nallūr (Fig. 51) here the details are obviously more developed. The loin-cloth is simple as also the sashes on the waist, but the girdle is ornate. The *siṁha-mukha* clasp is much more evolved than it is in other bronzes discussed above. The lowermost sash shows a shallow median loop, and into it is thrust the end of cloth that hangs from the mouth of the lion-face. Besides, a swinging tassel with a pipal-leaf-like pendant at its end is seen on each thigh and it hangs from a side of the mouth of the lion-face. A similar decorative detail is noticed in the Pārvatī (Fig. 76) belonging to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. While there it is static, here this item is made to swing about. This detail by its rhythmic sway has enhanced the beauty of the posture. There are the bows and short ends on either side. Like the above mentioned tassel, these are also treated as though whirling about which is obviously caused by the dance. Even in this detail the *sthapati* has kept his eyes on symmetry. The right leg is planted firmly on the Apasmāra Purusha while the heel alone of the left leg is lifted up, pressing the figure below by the toes of this foot. There are beautiful *pādasaras* on the feet and rings on the toes.

The Apasmāra Purusha of this figure is quite akin to that of Naṭeśa from Śivapuram and has features similar to those of Apasmāra of Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi Naṭeśa. Here the tail of the serpent is shown prominently in front. He is lying on a *padmāsana* over *abhadrāsana*. The double lotus *motif* of the *āsana* seems to have become almost standardised here. But the petals are naturalistic, though their tips are emphasised. There is hardly any space between any two petals. This *āsana* is moulded together with the *bhadrāsana* which is simple and beautiful. The spikes on either side are apparently well finished and they are supported by simple brackets below, which is a novel feature.

At the back[1] the details of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* including the ornaments, are seen beautifully depicted. The *śiraś-cakra* is worked like a real lotus in bloom and it is a development over that seen in the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram. Ten simple locks of hair fall on the naps of the neck and they are found close to each other. Interestingly they do not extend down much and are enclosed by a ring-like neck ornament from which hangs a piece which apparently stands for the usual pendant. The small size of each lock of hair and the ring enclosing the locks are characteristic of this period only. The beauty of the modelling of the figure and its pose are well brought out by this view. Fig. 108

The importance of this Naṭeśa lies, in spite of its developed features, primarily in the mode of dance represented by it. From the Kūram Naṭeśa up to the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram, the gradual development and perfection of the theme of *ānanda-tāṇḍava* can, more or less, be established. But coming as it does after the above series, and displaying a mode which is a distinct one and cannot, therefore, be fitted into that series, the only possible explanation for its occurrence at this juncture is that it was probably inspired by similar representations known from other parts of India or it continues merely an ancient tradition according to which modes of dance such as *catura* or *lalita* or *kaṭi-sama* were alone represented in sculpture and painting, and the modes of dance like *bhujaṅga-trāsita* were not even conceived. The latter explanation seems to be more plausible. It seems to be supported by the provenance wherefrom this Naṭeśa hails namely the Pudukkottai region. Here, upto about the period with which we are concerned representations of Naṭeśa in the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* form or forms allied to it have not been known. On the other hand even while representing Śiva as the destroyer of Kāla (*i.e.*, Kālāri), the *sthapatis* of this region had shown the Lord in the *catura* mode of dance only *e.g.*, Kālāri-mūrti of temple No. 1 of Mūvarkovil, Koḍumbāḷūr in the former Pudukkottai State.[2] This mode was very popular with the Chāḷukyas of Bādāmi and we have elsewhere referred to the significant influence that the Bādāmi Chāḷukyan traditions of art exerted on the *sthapatis* of the Pudukkottai region. There is, therefore, no wonder that the imported traditions were perpetuated with redoubled vigour and for a long itme, in this region. So, even at a time when marvellous specimens of *ānanda-tāṇḍava* Naṭeśas, such as the one from Śivapuram, were produced as a matter of course in the Choḷa territory, the *sthapatis* of the Pudukkottai region were apparently unaffected by these developments in the neighbouring territory and continued their own traditions as is well attested to by this beautiful Naṭeśa.

To the last phase of the school of Parāntaka I may be assigned two more bronzes. One of them is a Śrīnivāsa and the other a Gaṇeśa. Each of them has distinctive features of its own according to its iconographical requirements; but nevertheless the

[1] C. Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXXVIII, Fig. 7A.
[2] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Pl. XII, Fig. 7.

style in which the details of both are done, is easily recognised to be a step more advanced than that of similar figures examined above.

Fig. 109 The Śrīnivāsa bronze[1] comes from Vaḍakāḍu in the Tanjore district. It is 63 *cm* high including the pedestal. Images of *devīs* associated with this figure have not come down to us. When compared with the Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr (Fig. 99), this figure shows definitely more evolved features. A *kirīṭa* of *jāla* (net) work is seen on the head and the space between its base and the fillet is not much. The face is round but its features are not clearly seen owing to corrosion. In the ears are seen beautiful *makara-kuṇḍalas* of simple workmanship. The neck is normal and a pair of simple necklets is seen on it. The sacred thread and the *udara-bandha* are also corroded. The torso is worked in a tubular style which reminds one of the style of the Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr. The shoulders are normal. The pendant is seen on the right shoulder only. The arms are worked in the usual manner. The *keyūras* on the arms are of the pronged type but very simple in style. A set of three *valayas* adorns each wrist. The upper right hand holds the discus which is shown with spokes. Three very simple flames of small size are seen on its rim. The upper left hand holds the conch which is likewise simple and natural and shows three flames of the type seen on the discus. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose and the lower left hand is in the *kaṭy-avalambita* pose.

The legs are not particularly well finished. The lines on either side of the legs, just at the point of the knee, show a depression which is not at all pleasing. The garment of this figure, unlike that of Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr, shows sets of four horizonl lines, one of them beaded, running parallel to each other. In other respects it is akin to that Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 99). The interesting detail seen here is the waist-band consisting of sashes and girdles. Of the latter there are two and they show gem-set clasps, not a *siṁha-mukha* clasp. The sashe sare two in number of which the lower one shows a rather sharply curved short median loop, the like of which has not been met with in any other bronze dealt with above. Festoons hang from this sash on the thighs. More interesting than this is the beaded tassel hanging between the legs. This is the first time when this feature is noticed in a male figure. Subsequently it develops further. On the feet are seen *pādasaras*. At the back, the *śiraś-cakra* is noteworthy. It is in the characteristic full-blown flower form, just like the one met with in the *devī* figures of the Śrīnivāsa group from Sirupaṇaiyūr.

The twisted locks of hair hanging on the back are beautifully worked. The ring of the necklet that encircles the locks of hair and the pendant of heart-like shape shown prominently here are also interesting. The *yajñopavīta* is not very clear in this side. But the tucked-up end of the cloth, seen in the middle of the waist, is pronounced.

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 70, No. 3.

The other noteworthy feature of this figure is its pedestal. It stands on a *padmāsana* over a *bhadrāsana* which has simple mouldings. The former *āsana* is however interesting because its petals are not only not so beautiful and naturalistic as those of the Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr (Fig. 99) and Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 96) but also show a line incised along their margin. The occurrence of it in this bronze which is undoubtedly the main figure of a group from which the figure of Śrī and Bhū are missing, clearly indicates that by the time this bronze was made the tradition of showing the petals in a naturalistic form, without the margical lines, of even the main figures, was slowly changing, although there are some later bronzes which continue the earlier traditions to some extent. The spikes are also noteworthy because they are not, as usual, flat but are circluar rods. They are supported by lions which are vigorous. This feature occurs but rarely in bronzes of early periods and it is therefore interesting. On the basis of the style this piece may be ascribed to the beginning of the fourth quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Thus the importance of this figure as a link between the Sirupaṇaiyūr Śrīnivāsa group and the Śrīnivāsa and Vishṇu groups to be noticed below is clear. Apparently the description of this figure given in the *Catalogue*, on p. 70, has not recognised this in spite of the fact that the learned authors were, as on many occasions, really struck by the early features of this figure also when they say: "This image closely resembles Śrīnivāsa No. 1, (*i.e.*, the one from Sirupaṇaiyūr)[1] except the draperies..." They experienced this difficulty because they had started with the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam as the most important one and the earliest of all the Vaishṇavite images except one or two other bronzes. But a closer examination of these bronzes has enabled us to evolve a chronological sequence for them, which we believe fits better into the scheme of the development of the various details and *motifs* of the bronzes.

At Koḍiakkāḍu in the Tanjore District a number of bronzes have been unearthed. Fig. 110
One of them is the Gaṇeśa, ht. 42 *cm.* That its place is somewhere after that of the Sirupaṇaiyūr Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 99) is apparent from the close similarity of the style of the *padmāsana* of this bronze to that of the other. This is supported by another piece of evidence also namely the presence of a prancing lion-prop at the bottom of each of the spikes in the same manner, as it is seen in the Vaḍakāḍu Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 109). Consequently all the good qualities of a typical bronze of this period are present in this. The proportions are excellent; the modelling is superb; the stance is pleasing; and the decorations are limited and kept under classical restraint. In short this bronze is a fine specimen of its kind met with so far. That it is a good realistic study of the complicated theme is revealed by the clever way the animal head is integrated with the

[1] Words in brackets are ours.

dwarfish human body. In addition to this, the *Valampuri* manner of keeping the trunk is characteristic of Gaṇeśas of this period as for instance the Gaṇeśa from Śivapuram, Owing to these details, this bronze may be assigned to the same period as the above.

The few select specimens of the art of this school examined above unmistakably show the unprecedented heights to which the art had developed during this period. In size, in the variety of subjects chosen for representation, in technique and above all in quality. the examples of the art attributed to the school of Parāntaka I are, probably, unrivalled. Though most of the specimens belong to the Choḷa country, such examples as the bronzes from Kadri and the Pārvatī in the Freer Art Gallery, Washington D.C., U.S.A., probably belonging to Ceylon, prove the widespread nature of the traditions of the school of Parāntaka I. It appears that in every aspect of the art certain standards were established by this school from which the schools belonging to subsequent periods seem to have seldom departed. A majority of the bronzes are Śaivite in character, which may be taken to prove the popularity of Śaivism. Certain themes such as the *ānanda-tāṇḍava* Naṭeśa have been perfected by the school. It was probably the first to produce magnificent bronzes representing such noble groups as Rāma, Sītā, Lakshmaṇa and Hanumān and Vishṇu with *devīs*. Some marvellous specimens of bronzes of Buddhism were also produced by this school and they may be said to be unsurpassed for their size, significance and beauty.

In the field of decorative details the contributions of this school are by no means small. The *keyūra*-like ornament with prongs was developed to perfection, although the *nāga-valaya* type also continued side by side. The most interesting ornament that was invented by this school is the *vāji-bandha*, *i.e.*, the elbow ornament. Similarly the wave-like treatment of the lower garment of the figures, which was seen at its best in the beautiful Trivikrama bronze from Siṅgānallūr was continued with but slight modifications. The subsidiary details such as the *prabhāvaḷi* and *padmāsana*, too, have reached their perfection during this period.

In general, the traditions of art began to assume gradually a standardised form towards the end of the period, and the treatment of the figures especially of those belonging to the last phase of the school of Parāntaka I seems to be somewhat ornate, much of the naturalism of earlier specimens being absent from the latest examples of this school. Although its attempts during its last phase at producing bronzes of stupendous dimensions were tremendously successful, yet the lack of a few vital and fundamental qualities such as verve, sublimity and fluidity makes these huge bronzes more or less belong to the category of sculpture which in Europe is called as "baroque" although the connotation of this term may not be precisely applicable to any school of sculptures of India.

In the foregoing examination of the bronzes of this school of Parāntaka I an omission of a significant aspect of it would have been easily noticed. We mean the omission of comparing the specimens of bronzes representing the various themes with the specimens of stone sculpture or painting showing similar themes of known date. This omission has become inevitable and has occurred much to our regret. The comparsion, however little, of the above mentioned type was possible in the case of bronzes belonging to earlier periods because of the availability of literature on the stone sculptures of those periods, however small may be the number of books and articles that literature consists of. Unfortunately there are only a few books and few articles that treat of sculptures in stone that can be confidently ascribed to this period. Of the few books bearing on the subject *The Colas* (1955) by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri is easily the best. It may be said here that the state of affairs regarding the stone sculptures of the subsequent periods remains more or less the same although some articles on a few groups of sculptures belonging to Rājarāja I and Rājendra I's time are known. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in his book deals, to our great satisfaction, also with a few specimens of sculpture belonging to 11th, 12th and 13th centuries when the later Cholas were in power. Owing, however, to their small number even while dealing with the bronzes of later periods a comparison of the bronzes with the contemporary specimens of stone sculpture is necessarily casual and limited.

SCHOOL OF RĀJARĀJA I

Let us now examine a few specimens of bronzes of the school of Rājarāja I, in order to know about the development of the art during the period of reign of this king.

The Gaṇeśa[1] (ht. 36.5 *cm*) from Seṭṭipulam, Tanjore District may be said to be one of the earliest examples of this school. That its features are more evolved than those of Gaṇeśa from Śivapuram examined above (Fig. 94) is apparent. The *makuṭa* is significantly different in form from any other of its kind. It is conical and its *karaṇḍas* are not distinct. This is due to the fact that they are hidden away by a series of circular bands that go to decorate the *makuṭa*. The ears are small. The elephant head however has not deviated much from the naturalistic style. But the trunk is rather long and is therefore slightly unnatural. Here it is curving to the left side and is touching the sweet-meat held by the lower left hand. The torso is longer than that of Śivapuram Gaṇeśa. There are two necklets seen distinctly. The sacred thread seems to have a large strand with an interesting knot over the left chest. From this knot three threads are seen to go over the left shoulder while below the knot two threads form the larger strand and the third thread is short and curves just below the right chest. The *udara-bandha* seems to be of cloth. The style of the torso of this figure is distinctly different Fig. 111

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 2.

from that of Śivapuram Gaṇeśa. Nevertheless, the lines of the sides are good and the belly is still pot-like. The shoulders have become like those of human beings. A strand of hair is seen on either shoulder but it is here undecked with flowers. There is the pendent strand on the right shoulder. The arms too have assumed the form of those of human beings and hence they are comparatively slender. The joining of arms to the shoulder is interesting. The armlets show a decorative piece, probably set with gems, in front. A simple band serving the purpose of the elbow ornament is seen on each elbow. Only a single wristlet is seen on each wrist. The goad held in the right hand is obviously much more evolved than that found in the Śivapuram Gaṇeśa. The style of the noose too is different. The other two hands hold the tusk and *modaka* respectively.

The legs, like the arms, are taller and more like those of normal human beings than like those of a dwarf. The interesting details found here are the broad festoons and tassels hanging from the waist-band which is not, however, prominent. Neither a clasp nor any median loop is seen in this figure. But bows and hanging ends of cloth are seen on either side. They are apparently in a simpler style than that in which these details are done in the Gaṇeśa figures to be discussed below. The noteworthy feature of the hanging ends is that they are not in two strands as is seen in the figures of the Śrīnivāsa group from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 154) and in the Gaṇeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 119) discussed below.

There is no *padmāsana* here. Instead of it a circular raised part is seen on the *bhadrāsana* which is high and possesses mouldings which are absent from the *bhadrāsana* of the Śivapuram Gaṇeśa noticed above. The spikes are somewhat archaic in style and they are supported by slender brackets. This icon may, therefore, be seen to be an interesting specimen of Gaṇeśa and it may be assigned to the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 112 The Chaṇḍikeśvara, ht. 44 *cm*, from Okkūr, Tanjore District, may be said to belong to about this time. Its modelling is apparently similar to that of Gaṇeśa (Fig. 111) discussed above. In the depiction of the legs, the element of proportion is given due importance here. The gentle forward bend of the figure which is responsible for the graceful bend of the right leg is treated in a superb manner. This coupled with the ecstatic expression of the face and the *añjali* pose of the hands has made the figure a rare masterpiece of a study of an ardent devotee. The hair is arranged fanwise high up by means of a ribbon with a graceful knot on one side, and a prominent fillet is seen round the head. On the forehead are traces of the third eye which is intended to answer the appellation of Chaṇḍika-īśvara. It is very significant in this respect, because no other figure except the seated one (Fig. 207) representing this saint shows the third eye. The ears are empty but there is a flower on

each of them. There are two necklets on the neck one simple and small and the other ornate and broad. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded and broad. On the shoulders are strands of hair twisted into several curls, the ends of which hang over the arms. The characteristic pendant, here shown as possessing more than three tassels, is seen on the right shoulder. A single untwisted strand of hair is seen on the corresponding shoulder, probably intended, as has been surmised above, to balance the pendant on the other shoulder. Besides, a looped string of pearls is seen on either shoulder of which an earlier example is seen in the Avalokiteśvara figure from Kadri. *Nāga-valayas* and a set of three *valayas* are seen on the arms and wrists respectively. His characteristic weapon the *paraśu* or an axe is seen. It is noteworthy that its workmanship reminds one of that of the *paraśu*, seen in the Somāskanda (Fig. 36) from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu. The cross-band seen at the place where the axe and the handle join is obviously in the tradition of work of that Somāskanda. The lower garment consists only of loin-cloth and it is decorated with beautiful wheel designs as in several other bronzes examined above. The face is nearly round and the nose is shown fleshy and realistic. At the back dressing of the hair is beautiful; the curly locks of hair fall gracefully over the neck; and the lock of hair at either extreme end is decorated with flowers and it beautifully curls over the shoulder. Further, the elegance of modelling and of the stance is also brought out clearly by this view. Fig. 113

This bronze is an interesting study of a saint. Above, a representation of the saint in the seated form (Fig. 84) has been noticed. But this bronze seems to be one of the earliest examples of a study in bronze of the saint in standing pose, because during subsequent periods innumerable standing figures of the saint were made. This bronze is therefore interesting in more than one respect. That it served as a prototype for similar standing figures of saints is easily seen from the similarity of style that exists between this and such bronzes as the Goḷaka-maharishi (Fig. 114) and Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 180) to be discussed below.

The *padmāsana* of this bronze is better worked than that of Pārvatī from Okkūr (Fig. 193) to be discussed below but not so well worked as the *padmāsana* of Naṭeśa (Fig. 88) from the same place mentioned above. The tips of the petals are shown in low relief while the other parts are indicated by lines. Even then, they are naturalistic. It is to be noted that the space between two petals is absent except near their tips, where a bit of the intermediate petal is seen. This is how the fusion of the sides of the petals has taken place in later bronzes.

The authors of the *Catalogue* while describing it (*ibid.*, p. 130) have said that it comes after the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 121) to be described below. On grounds of the stage of development of the details of this figure as shown above it is

given an earlier date here. It is quite possible that there does not exist any considerable gap of time between this and the Velāṅkaṇṇi bronze; and all of them can therefore be ascribed to about the same period. The reasons adduced, for assigning the Chaṇḍikeśvara a place after the Velāṅkaṇṇi Chaṇḍikeśvara, by the learned authors of the *Catalogue* are that it does not possess the elbow ornament and its necklaces "depart much more definitely from the form characteristic of images of Choḷa type." We have said repeatedly that the presence or absence of one or two details of a figure are not likely to alter its age which should be based on the style of a majority of other details. In this instance, it is true to a great extent, because in spite of the absence of the elbow ornament, the other details are less developed than those of the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi. Hence this may also be attributed to the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 114 The bronze said to represent Goḷaka-maharishi[1] from Koḍikkaṛai, Tanjore District, may be taken up next. Before examining it in detail it becomes necessary to say a few words about its identification. Though it is said to represent Goḷaka-maharishi, "the founder of a well-known line of Śaiva Ācāryas",[2] probably on the authority of the tradition relating to it, its close affinity to representations of Chaṇḍikeśvara is such as to make it also a representation of the saint. Interestingly its resemblance, both in conception and execution, to the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Okkūr, is remarkable and this identity of style between them, may be said to afford a striking clue to the probable identification of the figure in question as Chaṇḍikeśvara, and not Goḷaka-maharishi.

The figure stands in *ābhaṅga* posture which is obviously charming. The hair is arranged in a fashion very much similar to that of Chaṇḍikeśvara from Okkūr. As this is assigned to a slightly later period, the treatment of this detail is naturally more evolved. There are three rows of beaded garlands seen round the head. The beads are of *Rudrākṣha* berries. This is a novel one not met with in any other figure of its kind. It is interesting to note the manner of depiction of the eyes and eye-brows. That is these are indicated by prominent lines; and the eye-balls are clearly shown by circles. Similar is the treatment of the eyes etc. of such figures as Choḷa queen (Fig. 168) to be noticed below. The expression on the face suggests spiritual joy. The ears are short which is a characteristic of bronzes of this period. In each of the ears is seen a short and simple *patra-kuṇḍala* which seems to have become an example of the grooved type. Here it is necessary to mention the fact that in the Chaṇḍikeśvaras noticed above it was not seen. But in the Chaṇḍikeśvara (Fig. 84) from Tiruveṇkāḍu similar *patra-kuṇḍalas* are seen in both ears whereas in the other Chaṇḍikeśvara from Tanjore District (Fig. 207)

[1] O.C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*, Pl. LXXVI and K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Pl. XVI, Fig. 34.
[2] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 727.

this ornament is seen in the left ear. So, this decorative detail does not seem to be a characteristic feature of Chaṇḍikeśvara figures.

The neck is somewhat short and it is ornamented with a close-fitting necklet of *Rudrāksha* berries. The torso is beautifully modelled. The lines of the sides are rhythmic and flow smoothly. The breast part is rather narrow. The shoulders are high and are treated in a refined manner. Unlike the Chaṇḍikeśvara figure noticed above, no decorative embellishments are seen on them. It is not known if the absence of these has a bearing and significance on the identification as well as the date of this figure. Though the arms are apparently stout they are proportionate. The manner of joining the arms to the shoulders is novel because in none of the bronzes examined so far have the tops of the arms been shown projecting beyond the level of the chest. A thick *kaṅkaṇa* or *valaya* is seen on each wrist. The arms are short as expected. They are held up and the hands are shown in *añjali* pose characteristic of Chaṇḍikeśvara figures. That it belongs to the group of early figures of its kind is known from the absence of a flower garland in between the hands which is seen in some of the later Chaṇḍikeśvara figures. The *paraśu* which is his characteristic emblem is absent. The legs, like the arms and the rest of the body are treated completely in the round. The lines of the sides are beautiful and their sharp sway, noticed especially in the lines of the left side, is interesting. The right leg is kept a little forward and slightly bent while the left leg is planted firmly on the pedestal. The loin-cloth is worked in an interesting manner. Its folds are suggested by means of closely running parallel lines. A thick gem-set girdle is seen on the waist. Its clasp is decorated with criss-cross pattern and has a short loop on either side. From this hangs below, the end of the cloth with a pointed tip which curves to the right side.

The knee-caps are not prominent; nor are the elbows angular. This is a rather interesting detail which is a characteristic of early bronzes. The *padmāsana*, though not clear, is another noteworthy detail of this figure. Curiously the lower row of petals is very large while the upper one is comparatively small. The petals are beautiful and do not seem to possess the marginal lines. *Padmāsanas* of this type are frequently met with in some of the later bronzes. An immediate successor of this may be seen in the Gaṇeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 119). A small ring is seen at the bottom of the *āsana* on either side.

Thus this bronze may be said to be another typical example of the period.

Similar to the above in style but somewhat thick-set is the bronze supposed to represent Mārkaṇḍeya belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Māyūram, Tanjore District. Certain details of this bronze, such as the naturalistic features of the face, are of a high order of workmanship so that one will be inclined to ascribe it to

Fig. 115

an early date. But the treatment of a majority of other details such as the ears, the *yajñopavīta*, the elbows, the nipples, the *añjali* pose and the knee-caps is such that it cannot be placed earlier than the period under discussion. Particularly noteworthy is the stylistic flower held between the hands which is doubtless the precursor of the same detail met with in the bronze representing the Choḷa King (Fig. 206) to be dealt with below. The other interesting details of this bronze are the following: The *ābhaṅga* pose is rendered in a splendid manner. The youthful appearance of the figure is beautifully suggested by the soft and chubby facial features. On top of the head is seen the hair knotted and looped, the loop hanging in front. Only a piece of cloth serves the purpose of a loin-cloth. But the treatment of the waist-cord which is beaded, is interesting and its hanging ends and loop are worked with consummate skill. This little piece of decoration which is all that embellishes the figure has enhanced the beauty of the already well executed bronze, to a remarkable extent, and it speaks volumes about the capacity of the *sthapati* as a master artist, who by introducing a simple design here and a decoration there is capable of making his works as great specimens of art.

As regards the identification of the figure, that it represents Ṛishi Mārkaṇḍeya may be taken as correct for the present. The other Ṛishi-like person who is frequently represented in a similar form is Jñānasambanda, the Śaivite saint of Tamil-nāḍ. But he used to be shown as a baby with the right hand in *sūcī* pose and the left hand holding a small cup. Further he is usually represented as nude and without a sacred thread. A beautiful bronze representing this saint from Śivapuram (Fig. 125) is examined below. So this figure cannot be considered as a representation of that saint. It cannot also be considered as a representation of such other saints of Tamil-nāḍ as Māṇikkavācaka and Appar, because both of them have their distinctive emblems namely a manuscript in the left hand and a spud respectively. Sometimes figures of Appar may be shown without the spud but even then their identification will be easy from the poses of their hands and other details. The present figure is therefore a rare icon of the Ṛishi.

The bronzes representing Māheśvarī, Naṭeśa, Gaṇeśa and Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi have features which entitle them to a place after the above figure. We shall deal with them *seriatim*.

Fig. 116 The bronze representing Māheśvarī from Velāṅkaṇṇi[1] may also belong to about this period. It is the first figure of a goddess with more than two arms that is examined here. This figure has been written upon by Mr. O. C. Gangoly[2] as well as by the authors of the *Catalogue*. This was not illustrated in the *Catalogue*. Apparently this is one of the beautiful specimens of the art of bronzes. Its features, described below, show however that

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 119-20.
[2] *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. XLIX.

its date is somewhere about the end of the 10th century A.D. Several representations of this goddess belonging to later times are known but this seems to head the list of such bronzes and to have served as a model for them. A brief description of this figure is given on pp. 119–120 in the *Catalogue*. But its fuller description is as follows :—

The figure is seated in the *sukhāsana* posture. "Hair is arranged to resemble a flame" and is heart-like in form. Each hair is separate and is not braided unlike the Māheśvarī illustrated on Pl. 56, No. 312 in *The Art of India and Pakistan*. The crescent moon and the *Dātura* flower are shown there but not distinct. Festoons are shown in a circle on this halo-like hair-dress. The fillet is simple. The space between it and the *keśa-bhāra*, is much.

The face is round and the features are soft and beautiful. The eyes and eye-brows are shown as thick and fleshy. The nose is soft and fleshy and has not become sharp *i.e.*, it is still realistic. The cheeks are chubby. A gentle smile is apparent in the expression. A thicker and shorter *patra-kuṇḍala* of the type found in the Śrīdevī of the Śrīnivāsa group from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 154) to be discussed below is seen in the left ear while a simple and subdued *makara-kuṇḍala* is seen in the other ear. A thick set of necklets is seen on the neck which is somewhat short. A *yajñopavīta* with all the three strands joined together, is seen on the trunk. Its sway is not much but it is graceful. The torso is exquisitely finished, although as is characteristic of the sculptures of this period, the lines of the sides, instead of moving up in a smooth and rhythmic curve appear to bend sharply at about the level of the navel. This had detracted to some extent the otherwise beautiful modelling of the torso. The breasts are full and are treated deftly. A *bandha* is seen here but unlike in the Śrīdevī figures, it does not cross "the breasts in front but it passes above them."[1] Its knot is simple and the end which is not ornamented is left free. The shoulders are normal and are not treated so as to suggest strength or power. A curly strand of hair with flowers tucked in it is seen falling on each shoulder and its end hangs low on the arm. Unlike in some of the figures examined above, only on the right shoulder is seen the decorative pendant or curly strand of hair. This shows, as we have already seen above, that here is an example of bronze which is seen to continue certain features which are characteristic of earlier bronzes.

The arms are moulded with skill but in the treatment of the mass a certain amount of failure is apparent. *Nāga-valaya* type of armlets are seen on the arms and a set of three *valayas*, not suggesting that they are realistic, is depicted on each wrist. The fingers are however full of tenderness. The angularities of the elbow are conspicuous. The upper right hand holds a *paraśu* which, when compared with the *paraśu* of the

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 120.

Chaṇḍikeśvara examined above, is advanced in style. The upper left hand holds a deer which is not well finished. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose, and the corresponding opposite hand is in *āhāya-varada* pose. The disposition of the arms, as is characteristic of the bronzes of period, is stereotyped.

The legs are smoothly finished and there is grace in the lines of the legs. The loin-cloth is plain. The waist-bands are broad and simple. There is a *simha-mukha* knot in front. Its developed form is easily seen from the manner in which the bow-like projections are treated. One of the bands shows a deep median loop of which the curved end is seen projecting a little out of the pedestal. No tips of ends of the cloth, usually found in the figures of this period, are seen in this bronze. Nor are there the bows and the hanging ends on either side. The small detail namely the projecting tip of the tucked-up end of the cloth on the left side of the waist which used to be found in bronzes of earlier times, occurs here but it is rather stylised. Enough attention does not seem to have been bestowed on the hips which are consequently subdued. In spite of the figure being slightly stiff, which has been accentuated by its erect posture, on the whole its treatment is invested with grace and charm. The occurrence of this quality in a figure representing a goddess in one of her mildy terrific aspects, gives an added significance to the figure.

The figure is seated on an oval *padmāsana* over a *bhadrāsana* both of which are moulded together and finished in an exquisite manner. The *padmāsana* is the most interesting part of the pedestal. The treatment of its petals is specially noteworthy. They are naturalistic and do not apparently show the grooves along their margin which is another earlier feature. Their tips are slightly emphasised. The intermediate petals are clearly seen in the lower row whereas the petals of the upper row are as usual smaller in form and larger in number than the petals of the lower row. The workmanship of this pedestal reminds one of the *padmāsana* seen in the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram (Fig. 93). It apparently seems to be the precursor of the *padmāsanas* of the seated Buddha (Fig. 179) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam to be dealt with below. That this bronze is an interesting specimen of the art is therefore clear.

Fig. 117 The headdress of Naṭeśa[1] ht. 84 *cm*, is "compressed into a *makuṭa* form." It resembles the headdress of Naṭeśa from Tiruvaraṅguḷam (Fig. 107). In view of the fact that in none of the Naṭeśas examined below belonging to later periods do we find this *makuṭa* form of headdress repeated, this Naṭeśa may be said to be one of the last examples possessing this feature: and it is a positive proof for this bronze being nearer in date to earlier Naṭeśas examined above. "The cobra and crescent are clearly shown on its surface to right and left respectively, but are neither large nor strikingly in high relief.

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. XVII, Fig. 1.

Below them are flowers, that on the left probably intended for the double *Dātura* or possibly for a lotus, and the very different flower on the right perhaps for the pendulous *Cassia fistula*. The skull is not very distinct and it is quite possible that a jewel was intended instead."[1] There are seven whirling locks on each side of the head. Each of them is thick and rope-like and it is definitely more evolved than the whirling lock in the Okkūr Naṭeśa. A comparison between a lock of this Naṭeśa with that of Naṭeśa from Śivapuram shows, however, that the latter is somewhat more refined than the former. But the decorative flower designs found between the locks of this figure are large and are much advanced. Interestingly enough small projecting piece simulating the tip of a smaller lock is seen attached to each of the flowers of the outer-most series. The two top-most locks of hair are designed like beautiful creeper pattern which is not seen through. No figure of *Gaṅgā* is present. This is another definite clue to its early date. The fillet is not distinguishable. The face is rather ovoid and the treatment of its feature is rather peculiar to this figure. The sunken eyes distinguish this figure from the rest. The nose has become somewhat sharp, a feature which becomes more prominent in the bronzes of subsequent periods. The lips and the cheeks are however beautifully done. There is the suggestion of smile in the expression and it indicates the joy of the Lord. The ears are short. *Makara-kuṇḍala* of a subbued variety is seen in the right ear. A long and simple *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the left ear. "There are three heavily embossed necklaces, the uppermost plain, the next broad with pendants throughout and ornamented centre. The third hangs from beneath them to a little above the waistband." It is clear that the style of these necklaces is quite akin to that of the necklaces of bronzes examined above. The long *hāra*, as has been mentioned above more than once, in Śaivite figures especially in Naṭeśa, is almost an invariable characteristic. The *yajñopavīta* is simple and shows only a single strand. The *udara-bandha* of cloth has become more refined than that of Naṭeśa from Śivapuarm. The refinement consists of the attenuation of the part which starts to flow from the stomach, the narrowing of the space between the two ends, the non-extension of the tips of the flowing ends beyond the fringe of the *prabhā* and the finger-like projection found in the tip of the upper flowing end.

The torso is akin in style to that of Māheśvarī examined above. As is characteristic of figures of this period the lines of the sides are not so beautiful as they ought to be. A slight constriction is noticed at the level of the stomach on the left side and the line going up from there is slightly stiff. The line on the right side however suggests a rhythmic flow. The rather slender modelling with a comparatively narrow chest coupled with the narrow hips suggests that the *sthapati* who did this was guided by

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

traditions which had advanced far from those according to which the Naṭeśas from Tiruvaraṅguḷam and Śivapuram had been done. The shoulders are treated in a manner suggesting power. There are the usual curly strands of hair on them. There is the characteristic strand of pendent hair on the right shoulder. Whether there is another on the other shoulder cannot be said. It is not probably there. The arms are modelled in a beautifully tapering manner. But in the treatment of the arm in the *gaja-hasta* pose the *sthapati* does not seem to have succeeded to the extent he has succeeded in the modelling of the rest of the figure. Not only is this arm stiffer than the other three but it also produces the impression on the beholder that it is shorter than the others. The manner of showing the arm at the shoulder point is somewhat inartistic and the failure of the *sthapati* seems to be mainly due to the difficulty he experienced in depicting this feature. The angularities are seen in a pronounced manner in the arms. However the treatment of the hands and the fingers is beautiful and tender. *Nāga-valaya* type of armlets are seen on the arms. Very subdued type of elbow-ornaments are also seen. A pair of thick *valayas* adorns each wrist. The usual emblems are held in the upper hands. The drum is held between the first finger and thumb of the upper right hand. In the corresponding left hand is held the flame. The manner of holding the flame is novel. Instead of keeping it on the palm as in the Tiruvaraṅguḷam Naṭeśa (Fig. 107), it is held gracefully by the hand in *ardha-candra-mudrā*, that is between the thumb and the first finger. This manner of holding the flame is magnificently shown in the Tirvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa (Fig. 164). The treatment of the flame itself is interesting. Three tongues are prominently seen although traces of one more tongue at either end of the central lump at bottom is seen, which would then make the flame five-tongued. But in view of the hesitation of the *sthapati*, apparent in the depiction of the extra tongues at either end, it is clear that he was not so bold as the *sthapati* who did the Śivapuram Naṭeśa where the flame shows five tongues. More probably, the fact may be that this *sthapati* clung steadfastly to older traditions which permitted only three tongues to be shown in the flame. It may be mentioned here in passing that only upto to the period of this Naṭeśa, the three-tongued flame is seen in the hand of Naṭeśa. With the exception of one or two, in almost all the examples of Naṭeśa to be noticed below, this flame has more than three tongues, usually five. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose. On the arm the usual ornament of a serpent is seen, and the manner in which it is bent is interesting. The lower left arm is in the *gaja-hasta* pose.

The legs are also moulded heavily. But their proportions are remarkably fine. The same kind of treatment of the joints as found in the arms marks the joints of the legs too. So the lines that bind them have become to some extent stiff. Nevertheless the postures of both the legs have been rendered with great care. They may be said to have reached the final stage of standardisation so far as the *bhujaṅga-trāsita* mode of dance is

concerned. The foot of the left leg which is lifted up reaches upto the inner fringe of the *prabhāvaḷi*. "The girdle seems to consist of four separate bands rather than of a single band, with lines of decoration.....The second band from the top bears a few rather heavily embossed flower ornaments, alternately large and small. The loin-cloth is without decoration. Anklets are absent". But *pādasaras* are present. The absence of the anklets is another early feature.

The Apasmāra Purusha is comparatively small. But the decorative details on the demon are characteristic of the period. The arrangement of the hair is particularly noteworthy. For, instead of showing it up, it is made to hang low.

The *prabhāvaḷi* is an interesting decorative piece of this figure and it affords a clue to the date of the figure. It has nearly an oval form which is obviously a development over the *prabhā* of the Śivapuram Naṭeśa. The space between the ends of the *prabhā* where they join the *āsana* is narrow and is determined by the narrow form of the *āsana* itself. In the case of the Śivapuram Naṭeśa as well as the Tiruvālangāḍu Naṭeśa, the large oval forms of the *āsanas* themselves, have been responsible for their *prabhāvaḷis* to look more like arches on props. Unlike the *prabhā* of the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram, the rim of the *prabhā* of the Naṭeśa in question is flat and shows ribs along fringes, both inside and outside. In the thick central part are seen designs of circles and stars, which are characteristic of sculptures of the school of Rājarāja I. It must be noted here that the ends of the *prabhā* are simple and do not show any animal designs. The flames seen on the fringe of the *prabhā* are interesting. Despite the fact that the form of the bottom of each flame is somewhat like the head of a question mark, and that it is directly attached to the fringe of the *prabhā*, the number of tongues seen in each flame is as usual three, except the one at the crest of the *prabhā*, which has five distinctive tongues. Each of the other flames too is rendered in such a manner as to suggest the springing up of a fourth tongue. But this is apparently only in the beginning stage. The next stage of development of this detail will be seen in the Naṭeśas and other figures with *prabhā* to be examined below. This, coupled with the fact that there are here a large number of flames, shows that this *prabhā* is more developed than the one found in the Śivapuram Naṭeśa. Thus the details of the *prabhā* afford another instance of the figure being an early one.

Similarly the treatment of the *padmāsana* confirms the above view. There are the usual two courses, both of them having been given equal importance. The petals are naturalistic; but as in some of the earlier bronzes *e.g.*, the Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakāḍu, (Fig. 109) marginal lines are seen in them. This feature is shared by the Gaṇeśa figure to be examined immediately after this. It must be mentioned here that in almost all the later bronzes the manner of depicting the petals is more ornate. So the workmanship of the pedestal too evidently supports the early dating of the figure.

Fig. 118 The back view shows the exquisite manner in which the dance is poised, this being accentuated by the oval *prabhā* tilting gently to proper left. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is distinctly seen here. The way in which the two wings of the whirling locks are attached to the head is characteristic of the period. Interestingly no *śiraś-cakra* is present; nor is there any indication of it in a flower form as seen in the Śivapuram Naṭeśa. The other interesting details seen in this side are the curly locks hanging over the back of the head, the end of cloth hanging behind the left arm-pit and the flowing ends of the *uttarīya*. The heaviness of the modelling is also clearly visible from here.

The size of the bronze is considerably more than that of the Naṭeśas so far examined and it affords another proof for its date. The various features of this image, as detailed above may be seen to be at a stage earlier than that at which similar features of the beautiful Naṭeśa in the Big Temple at Tanjore are. The latter bronze for all intents and purposes, may be said to belong to the last phase of the school of Rājarāja I. Working backwards, the bronze Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi under discussion may be said to be a few years or a decade or so earlier than the Tanjore Naṭeśa. This gives the date of about the end of the 10th century A.D. for it.

It is now necessary to consider the remarks about this figure of the authors of the *Catalogue*, which are as follows: "Naṭeśa No. 3 (*i.e.* the one under discussion)[1] which is considerably larger than Nos. 1 and 2 (*i.e.* those from Puṅganūr and Belūr respectively)[1] differs from them chiefly in having a long necklace of *Rudrāksha* beads and a headdress of *makuṭa* form, in the greater elaboration of the lotuses in its hair and in the presence of the usual loop on the right and a pair of long flowing ends on the left in the waist-band. In the form of its headdress it resembles the Naṭeśa from Polonnaruwa figured in Pl. IV of Coomaraswamy's Catalogue which, as already indicated, seems likely to date from the Choḷa period. In the presence of a long necklace it resembles the much less graceful and more modern-looking Polonnaruwa Naṭeśa figured in Pl. I and III, Fig. 4 of Coomaraswamy's Catalogue (also Pl. IX of Gangoly's "South Indian Bronzes"), in which the upper half of its *prabhā* further resembles in having the same arrangement of alternating circles and stars on its inner band, the stars, being however, omitted in its lower half. But the two images are not otherwise much alike and this pattern of circles and stars is also found on the *prabhās* of Naṭeśas Nos. 2 and 8. Of the three images found with Naṭeśa No. 3 two at least are of Choḷa type (see p. 52), and the same could probably be said of the remaining one but that it happens to be a Gaṇeśa and so not easily comparable. The very imperfect evidence at our disposal indicates that long necklaces are usually an indication of post-Choḷa date, but that they seem not to be entirely unknown in Choḷa times, especially in images of Śiva and of saints,

[1] Words in brackets are ours.

and perhaps also in those intended to convey a sense of great activity such as *dvārapālakas* (see above, pp. 34–40). In view of the images of Chola type with which the above Naṭeśa No. 3 was found, and of the difficulty of assigning even an early post-Chola date to any Polonnaruwa images, the probability seems to be that both Naṭeśa No. 3 and the Polonnaruwa Naṭeśa of Coomaraswamy's Pl. I belong to a comparatively early period, either late Chola or early Vijayanagar, though on grounds of style alone we should have been inclined to consider them as more rather than less recent than Naṭeśa No. 2."[1]

The last sentence of the above long quotation, may be seen to sum up the learned authors' considered opinion after a very cautious examination of the Naṭeśa in comparison with a few other Naṭeśa images. But the details examined by them seem to have been extremely limited of which the long necklace seems to have been taken as the primary one. More than once we have had occasion to refer to this detail above where it has been suggested, after a careful examination of numerous specimens of bronzes, that not a single detail but only a combination of a majority of details characterising a number of sculptures of a particular period should form the basis for dating a piece of sculpture or bronze. We have pointed out above a variety of details of this Naṭeśa which have striking affinities only to similar details found in earlier Naṭeśa and not to the ones belonging to periods immediately following the period to which this Naṭeśa is assigned. Its affinities to much later ones especially to images of the early or late Vijayanagar Naṭeśas are therefore not at all noticeable. The difference between the Belūr Naṭeśa dated 1510 A.D. and this may be seen to be striking and therefore there is no comparison possible between them. We think that we had better leave this to be seen by the readers themselves from the illustrations of these bronzes and from the detailed descriptions of them given here. Another important thing noticed in the quotation given above is that the authors of the *Catalogue* had also based their conclusions on the similarities of details found between this Naṭeśa and those from Polonnaruwa. This was mainly due to the fact that the latter bronzes have been considered to have had definite associations with datable temples. We, on the other hand, have found that although datable or dated bronzes are extremely valuable for a study of the art of bronzes, in view of the extreme scarcity of such bronzes and of the availability of innumerable examples possessing unmistakable characteristic features of sculptures of various periods, the next best method by which approximate dating of bronzes could be arrived at is by a careful examination and analysis of details of groups of bronzes of various periods in comparison with those of the sculptures of the same periods. This method, as has been shown above, seems to be a fruitful one. In the light of our examination, this Naṭeśa bronze seems to fit

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 110.

extremely well into the chronological scheme we have proposed. The 11th–12th century dating of this figure given to it in the *Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 71, No. 310, also therefore requires to be modified. This bronze along with two other Naṭeśas has been examined more closely again by Mr. John Irwin in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 32–35. There he has revised the date of this as middle of the 11th century A.D., which also seems to be rather late.

Although the authors of the *Catalogue* have expressed a doubt regarding the
Fig. 119 contemporaneity of the bronze Gaṇeśa, ht. 52 *cm* from the same place with the above Naṭeśa on the ground that "it happens to be a Gaṇeśa and so not easily comparable",[1] the stage of development of its details as compared with that of the details of the Gaṇeśas examined above as well as the manner in which those details have been executed, which may be seen to be quite akin to the treatment of the Naṭeśa discussed above, the probability that this Gaṇeśa also belongs to the same period as the Naṭeśa seems to be great. Its description is as follows:—

Firstly like the Seṭṭipulam Gaṇeśa, this Gaṇeśa, so far as its torso is concerned, has become almost like that of a human being and the signs of the dwarfish features have become comparatively few. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is slightly ornate; the fillet is broad but its decoration is not clear. The head has not got many points of resemblance to that of the animal represented by this. The ears are however characteristic and are more evolved. The trunk, as usual, is curving to the left. There are three necklaces of which the middle one is very broad. The *yajñopavīta* is in two ribbon-like strands and no knot is seen on the left chest. The *udara-bandha* is also broad. The style of the torso is certainly more developed than that of the above two Gaṇeśas in that the belly has become somewhat flattened and naturalistic although the lines of the sides show flexions similar to those found in the lines of the sides of the Naṭeśa. The part between shoulders is treated naturalistically. On each shoulder is seen a small strand of hair, but the characteristic strand or ornament pendent on the right shoulder is absent from this figure. The arms are stout. Their proportions are beautiful. The armlets and *valayas* are simple. The front hands hold the tusk and the *modaka*. Of the two back hands the left one holds a noose while the right one, instead of a goad, holds a *paraśu* or axe.

The legs are as beautifully modelled as the arms are. The left leg is slightly bent suggesting that the figure is in motion and not stationary. The loin-cloth is simple. But there are waist-bands of which the lower one shows a median loop which is narrow and not broad as in bronzes belonging to earlier periods. Moreover as this feature is not met with in the two earlier Gaṇeśas, the novelty is itself interesting enough. Below the loop is seen the tapering end with a pointed tip of a cloth similar to the one met with in

[1] *Ibid.*

the Chaṇḍikeśvara and other figures examined above. The bows and the hanging ends seen on either side are more developed than those of the Seṭṭipulam Gaṇeśa. The depiction of the ends in duplicate is interesting; and the shorter end is seen hanging over the longer one upto the middle of the latter. The interest of this bronze Gaṇeśa from the points of view of the development of art and iconography is therefore great. The pedestal on which it stands adds significance to the importance of the figure especially in its dating. Although the double-lotus motif has been exemplified by this in a remarkable manner and the affinity of its workmanship to that of the pedestal of Naṭeśa is easily seen, yet its form reminds one of the *padmāsana* of the so-called Goḷaka-maharishi (Fig. 116) examined above. The petals are long and naturalistically worked. But characteristically the space between two of them is so small that only the tips of the intermediate petals are seen. Like the petals of the *padmāsana* of Naṭeśa those of the *āsana* of this Gaṇeśa too show lines along their margin, which has become a characteristic feature of bronzes of this period. The tips of the larger petals have become prominent. The modelling of the figure and the treatment of this *padmāsana* alone would have been sufficient to prove the contemporaneity of the figure with the Naṭeśa. But there are the other details too.

The most interesting details of the back side of the figure are the *śiraś-cakra* and the curly locks of hair falling on the back of the neck. The latter detail is exactly similar to that of Naṭeśa and Chaṇḍikeśvara of this group; and this indicates clearly that not only do all of them belong to the same period but they were all produced in the studio of one and the same *sthapati*. The ring-like detail seen enclosing the curly locks is noteworthy, as it is a special characteristic of the bronzes of this period which had its beginnings during the last phase of the school of Parāntaka I. Fig. 120

The *padmāsana* is moulded together with the *bhadrāsana* which is simple. The usual pair of spikes is seen attached to it.

The Chaṇḍikeśvara[1], ht. 66 *cm*, belonging to the same group is another remarkable bronze of its kind. But as it is later than the Chaṇḍikeśvaras examined above, a few new details not met with in them but seen more frequently in bronzes belonging to a period later than that to which this Chaṇḍikeśvara is assigned, are seen in this. For instance, the *keśa-bandha*, which is like *jaṭā-makuṭa*, of this figure has affinities only to that found in some of the Śiva or Pārvatī figures examined above. The prominent flower at its top is especially noteworthy. Flowers decorate the bottom of the *makuṭa*. The fillet is broad but it is not much decorated. The face is nearly round. The features are subdued and resemble the features of the so-called Goḷaka-maharishi or the Naṭeśa of this group. The depiction of the eyes is to be noted. Unlike the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Okkūr, there is no third eye on the forehead here. The ears are empty. They are short Fig. 121

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 130.

as is characteristic of bronzes of this period. The fan-wise arrangement of the hair on either side of the head is very interesting and is not met with in any other bronze. The treatment of the curls of hair is exquisite. The expression suggests self-absorption. The necklets are almost exactly similar to the necklaces adorning the Gaṇeśa discussed above, which is another proof for the identity in date of both these bronzes. The treatment of the *yajñopavīta* is likewise similar to that of the Gaṇeśa. The modelling of the torso is superb, although a little slenderness would have made the figure a rare masterpiece. On each shoulder a simple thick strand of hair is made to hang. The armlets are of the pronged type but they are simple. A pair of *valayas* is seen on each wrist. The arms though proportionate and beautifully moulded, are short which is a characteristic feature of bronzes of this period. The *añjali* pose of the hands is rendered in a masterly manner and its charm is enhanced by the exquisitely well finished fingers. Characteristically, no flower garland is seen between the hands.

As in the case of Naṭeśa, here also the hip portion is dealt with in a subdued manner. But the legs are short like the arms, and they seem to be slightly disproportionate too. Nevertheless, the lines of them are smooth-flowing and the knee-caps are not prominent. The left leg is bent to a slight degree so as to make the figure stand in the beautiful *abhaṅga* pose. The loin-cloth is decorated with flower designs. Two girdles are seen on the waist of which the lower one has a gem-set clasp with an end of it projecting on either side. Moreover, from it hangs a series of alternating festoons and tassels. This has been done very tastefully. Besides, a pair of flowing ends is seen hanging beautifully from the clasp mentioned above and attached to each thigh. This is very similar to the hanging ends seen in a number of bronzes discussed above. But the ends of cloth seen in this figure have a speciality of their own namely, their tips except in one, are decorated with a finely worked flower design from the centre of which projects a wick-like piece. Similar decorative ends are seen again in some of the bronzes to be examined below *e.g.*, the Māheśvarī of Gautam Sarabhai collection[1] and the Naṭeśa in the Big Temple at Tanjore.[2] This is obviously another commendable piece of decoration which enhances the beauty of the figure.

Fig. 122 At the back the *makuṭa* consists of thick curls of hair arranged in a tier-upon-tier form. Besides, five curly strands hang down on the back of the neck. This detail is similar to that of Gaṇeśa and Naṭeśa as has already been indicated. Interestingly the pendant is not seen in any of them. Nor is the bounding ring met with in Gaṇeśa present here. The other details like the sacred thread and waist-bands are all worked well.

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 56 (left).
[2] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas* (1955), Pl. XXV, Fig. 63.

The stand which may have been intended to be a *padmāsana* does not show the petals of lotus. It may be mentioned in this connection that the reason for showing the pedestals indistinctly in some of the bronzes representing lesser deities or saints is not known. We may perhaps hazard the view namely that the *padmāsana* is according to some schools of sculpture should be reserved for high gods and goddesses alone. Although it lacks details, the circular form of the *padmāsana* is pleasing. This, coupled with the simplicity of workmanship makes the *āsana* a really decorative embellishment to the figure.

In every respect this figure is obviously similar to the Naṭeśa from the same place and hence this may also be assigned to the same period as that of the Naṭeśa.

The magnificent Vishṇu, ht. 83 *cm*, with Śrīdevī, ht. 64 *cm*, and Bhūdevī, ht. 64 *cm*, from Peruntoṭṭam [1] may be examined next. This group of figures has been acclaimed as an important one by the authors of the *Catalogue*; and they have based their conclusions about the comparative antiquity of a majority of early figures, on the details met with in these figures. Among the Vaishṇavite bronzes discussed by the above mentioned authors this group takes precedence over others. But it would have been abundantly clear by now that, according to our examination, this group has a place definitely subsequent to a number of Vaishṇavite bronzes. This is borne out by the stage of development of the various details of these figures themselves. Fig. 123

Firstly, the modelling of this figure is slender and elegant. It is emphasised by the equally beautiful and elongate *kirīṭa*. The *kirīṭa* is much more ornate than that of the Vaḍakāḍu Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 109). The fillet does not project out much. The face is square in form and its features are sharper than those of the Śrīnivāsa. The sharp nose is especially noteworthy as well as the evolved treatment of the eyes and eye-brows. The *makara-kuṇḍalas* are refined. The necklaces are broad. The *yajñopavīta* is slender and its knot elegant. Similar is the case with the *udara-bandha*. The torso is strikingly different from that of the torso of Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakāḍu in that here it is slender. The chest is rather narrow; but the shoulders obviously project out making it necessary for the lines of the sides to become suddenly wide at the place where they join the armpits. This treatment is slightly unnatural as it is responsible for the hanging of the arms as though unconnected with the body. Moreover, the constrictions seen in the lines at the point of the stomach are noteworthy because this feature, as we have noticed above, is found to characterise bronzes belonging to this and the succeeding periods. On the right chest is shown a triangular mole which stands for the *Śrī-vatsa*. The usual locks of hair decorate the shoulder, but on each side, the lock of hair descends

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. I, Figs. 1, 2.

to a considerable length on the arm. Flowers are tucked in the locks. Besides, on each shoulder is seen a wavy strand of hair pendent in a graceful manner.

The arms, like the rest of the figure, are slender and beautifully proportionate and tapering. But that they have become a little more stiff and their angularities more emphasised than in the Śrīnivāsa mentioned above is easily seen. The pronged type of *keyura* is ornate, but at the same time the elbow ornament is subdued. The *valayas*, three on each wrist, have also become rather stylised. The lower right hand is in *abhaya*, but interestingly, instead of a regular lotus usually seen held by this hand in some earlier Vishṇus, a small full-blown lotus flower is seen on the space at the bottom of the first finger. A slender and beautiful *gadā* is held by the lower left hand. Discus in the upper right hand and conch in the corresponding left hand are seen. That these emblems are more evolved than those of the Śrīnivāsa we have been comparing with this, will be easily seen. As regards the flames decorating the emblems, they are also certainly more developed than the flames met with in the Śrīnivāsa. This is borne out by the distinctive basal flame seen in the conch as well as in the discus.

The legs are exceedingly well finished. The garment is refined. Instead of the wave-over-wave form, we have here lines with wide space between them suggesting the folds. The girdles and waist-bands are interesting. The broad tight-fitting girdle shows a very ornate *siṁha-mukha* with the hornlike threads on its head and a pair of long bow-like projections issuing out of its mouth. Of the two bands of *uttarīya*, which are broad and slightly stiff, the upper one does not show any loop while the lower one has a median loop which has not become narrow as in later bronzes although the tendency to constrict is seen at the points where the band begins to hang down. From the upper band hangs a series of monoliform festoons and tassels which is seen to be highly refined in workmanship. Interestingly enough, they are confined only to the front and are absent from the back, as seen in some of the female figures. Coming to the bows and the hanging ends of cloth on the sides, their ornateness is evident from the frilling of the tips of the ends as well as their stiffness. Unlike the hanging ends of cloth of some later Vishṇus, the shorter hanging end of cloth of this figure is seen over the longer one. The chain-like decoration seen in the Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakāḍu, is also met with here in a subdued form. *Pādasaras* are present here but no anklets.

Fig. 124 At the back the *śiraś-cakra* is worked as a wheel but with its spokes somewhat resembling narrow petals of flowers. A beautiful tassel hangs from the knob of the axle. The braided locks of hair with gracefully twisting ends hang down on the back. It is rather unaccountable why only one course of them is seen here whereas in almost all the examples of Vishṇus examined above two series of them, one over the other, are seen.

The ring that encloses these strands of hair is apparently more developed than that found in the figures mentioned above. The pendant is also interesting and it shows a beautifully curling tassel on either side. The noteworthy details of this side are the tucked-up end of the cloth at the waist, the clearly worked bows and the exquisite modelling of the buttocks. The rounded form of the entire figure is also clearly noticeable on this side.

The pedestal is finished obviously in the early traditions. But the petals have become slightly stiff and emphasis is laid on their tips. The mouldings of the *bhadrāsana* are beautiful. No figures of lion are seen in the indented part of the *bhadrāsana*. But there is a lump of metal serving as a support under each spike, which was probably intended to be shown as lion. It may be recalled here that vigorous lions as supports for the spikes have been seen in the Vishṇu from Vaḍakāḍu. It is now clear that taking it separately this bronze is seen to be an excellent example of the art.

The *devīs*, being in the same style as the Vishṇu, by their beautiful flexions, add charm to the group of which the main figure is in absolutely erect posture.

Both the *devīs* are more or less akin to each other in respect of several details, from the *makuṭa* to the pedestal. Though the difference between them lies mostly in their reversed postures, there are the following other differences in details also. The *kuṇḍalas* are of *patra* of a refined type in the Śrīdevī and of *makara*, of an ornate type similar to that of Vishṇu, in the Bhūdevī; *channavīra* is seen in the former and *yajñopavīta* in the latter; single simple bow is seen on either side in the former and ornate bow with the usual end of cloth in the latter; *śiraś-cakra* of petals without the bounding rim is seen in the former and *śiraś-cakra* with rim in the latter and the beautiful series of rings binding the ends of the *channavīra* and joining the ring that encloses the curly strands of hair at the back is seen in the former and a simple pendant in the latter.

That the style of these *devīs* is much more advanced than that of the female figures hitherto examined, especially of those of Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr is apparent from a comparative examination of illustrations themselves. It will become still more evident when both the groups are examined personally. The chief points noticed in the *devīs* under discussion that go to prove this are the following:—

The *makuṭas* and fillets of these *devīs* are refined. The facial features have become rather angular, this being especially noticeable in the treatment of the noses and chins. The strands of hair falling on the shoulders are longer and bear a larger number of flowers. The necklaces are definitely elaborate in their workmanship. Similar is the case with the *keyūras*, elbow ornaments and the *valayas*. But here the projecting pieces are distinctly seen in the elbow ornaments. The decorative strands of hair that hang in front of

both the shoulders show beautiful twists at their tips. Though the arms are proportionate and charmingly tapering and the fingers are tender and well executed, the pose of the *lola-hastas* being apparently stiff reveals somewhat a low standard of the *sthapati* who created the figures. This is amply illustrated by the treatment of the left arms of these *devīs* seen from the back side. The breasts are not so beautiful. The treatment of the stomach and the hip portion may be seen to have reached the stage where they have become nearly conventional. Though the hips are beautifully moulded, the excessive constriction of the lines of the sides has deprived the figures of their naturalism. Between them, greater attention seems to have been bestowed on the Śrīdevī. Hence its workmanship and pose are superior to those of the Bhūdevī. This is especially noticed in the back view. Can it be taken to indicate that their makers were different? Just as in the case of Vishṇu, these bronzes also have beautiful waist-bands with median loops. But the treatment of the pairs of hanging ends of cloth with pointed tips, attached one to each thigh and of the tassels and festoons, is superb. Like the Vishṇu these *devīs* have the tassels etc., only in front. The manner in which the garments are done is also noteworthy because although it is in an advanced style, certain elements of earlier traditions are seen to linger on in it, which becomes rarer in the bronzes belonging to subsequent periods.

The last detail to be noticed in the bronzes is the pedestal. In both, the pedestal is of the same form and style but, owing probably to the difference in the authorship, the pedestal of Śrīdevī is slightly larger than that of Bhūdevī. Except for the marginal lines seen in the petals of them, these pedestals are obviously of the same type as that of Vishṇu.

Despite the deficiencies met with in these three figures, there is no doubt that they are executed well and their artistic qualities are high. As they possess a majority of qualities of classical sculpture, these bronzes cannot be much later than the others examined immediately above. They may, therefore, be assigned to about the end of the 10th century or the beginning of the 11th century. Regarding the date of this group nothing definite has been said by the authors of the *Catalogue*, in spite of the fact that they, as we have said above, having assumed this group of bronzes to be one of the earliest of such sets, have referred to it in more than one place. The chief details that have been taken into account by the learned authors in assessing the antiquity of these bronzes are the *makuṭas*, especially of the *devīs*, the elbow ornaments of all the three, the necklaces and the emblems of Vishṇu.[1] Their considered opinion about the importance and date of this group is as follows:—

"The simple dignified treatment and light draperies of these images suggest the possibility that they may date from an unusually early period. The conch resembles that

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 27, 28, 34, 61.

which Jouveau-Dubreuil finds to be characteristic of stone images of the later Chola and Vijayanagar periods though its basal flame is rendered particularly conspicuous by being bent over and extended. The discus has the oblique position which he considers characteristic of the former and the ornamentation which he considers characteristic of the latter, of these two periods. Vishnu's headdress also has the form characteristic of these periods, but with greater affinity to the simpler Pallava than to the more elaborate modern form."[1] In the light of our examination of the details, item by item, and the ircomparison with similar details of bronzes representing, more or less, the same theme, the conclusion regarding the date of these bronzes that has been arrived at above seems to us to be inescapable although it can by no means be said to be final and unalterable in the light of future researches.

The Chaṇḍikeśvara from Taṇḍantoṭṭam[2] possesses certain interesting and new details not met with in the Chaṇḍikeśvaras examined above but which have since become characteristic of representations of the saint.

The headdress which is a high *keśa-bandha* shows not only the flower on top in a prominent manner, but also a series of curls arranged vertically on either side. This mode of hair-dressing is apparently an advancement over the mode of hair-dress seen in the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Okkūr (Fig. 112) and the so-called Goḷaka-maharishi from Koḍikkaṟai (Fig. 114). At the bottom of the *bandha* probably a garland is tied round. The fillet is broad, plain and divided into many compartments. The face is square. Although the features are sharp, the treatment of the eyes and nose is classical in quality. *Patra-kuṇḍalas* of short, thick type are seen in both the ears. About this ornamentation what we have said above (pp. 182–83) may be remembered here. *Kaṇṭhīs* of the broad and bejewelled type characteristic of sculptures of this period are seen on the neck; broad *yajñopavīta* with the three threads combined together is seen on the body and a thick and broad *udara-bandha* adorns the stomach. The torso is exquisitely moulded although the part between the shoulders is as broad as that below it. On the shoulders are seen the strands of hair also falling low on the arms. A strand of hair is seen hanging from the shoulder in front on each side. The arms are stout and elbows are apparently angular. But the armlets of which three are seen on each arm are interesting. The top-most one is of the *nāga-valaya* type. The middle one seems to be a simple *bandha*. The lower-most one serves as the elbow ornament but without the projecting piece. *Valayas* are seen on the wrists. Characteristically the axe is absent. As usual the hands are in *añjali* pose. In the Chaṇḍikeśvaras examined above, no flower garland was seen between the hands. A *motif* of this kind is seen for the first time in this figure, which is interesting from the point of view of the history of art and of iconography of Chaṇḍikeśvara images.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[2] C. Minakshi, *The Taṇḍantoṭṭam Bronzes*, Fig. 4 (left).

The legs are also stout and the knee-caps are apparently pronounced. The right leg is slightly bent while the left leg is firmly planted with a bend at the hip. The lines of the sides are not as beautiful as seen in the many examples of bronzes examined above. The loin-cloth shows closely running lines suggesting the folds on it. The waist-bands seem to be simple, but the clasp in front is elaborate as is seen from the manner in which the bow-like projections are done. Besides, the very interesting piece of decorative detail of the end of cloth seen in between the thighs is characteristically pointed and curved towards the right thigh. An anklet of a thick *valaya* type adorns each ankle and a *pādasara* of beautiful workmanship is seen on each foot. The figure stands on a *padmāsana* of the usual type. But the details of its workmanship are not clearly seen, although the emphasis laid on the tips of the petals is very clear.

In general, except for the beautiful decorative details, the graceful *ābhaṅga* pose and the novelty of one or two details, the workmanship of the figure is not upto the mark. It is evidenced by the heaviness of modelling and pronounced angularities of the joints. Nevertheless this exemplifies the traditions that prevailed at the period and is seen to indicate the way in which new traditions were becoming fashionable.

In view of the fact that several details of the figure particularly the face and the modelling are somewhat in the characteristic style of the period to which the Vishṇu group from Peruntoṭṭam is assigned, this bronze may be assigned to a slightly later period, *i.e.*, to the beginning of the 11th century A.D.

The charming bronze representing Jñānasambanda from Śivapuram, the baby saint
Fig. 125 of Śaivism, may be seen to be almost akin in style to that of the above figure. The agreement between them especially in the modelling, the treatment of the joints and posture is striking. Owing to the difference in the theme, iconographically both of them differ in a majority of details.

This figure is nude as it represents a baby and the heaviness of modelling may be said to be due to the necessity of showing the baby in a chubby manner. The *dvibhaṅga* pose adds beauty to the figure. The hair is close-cut but a small tuft is seen in the centre of the head and it reminds one of the same detail met with in the Mārkaṇḍeya (Fig. 115). In the place of the fillet, a beautiful series of small ringlets is seen. The face is nearly square and the features are sharp. The expression is obviously one of divine joy. The ears are realistic. The postures of the arms are also tastefully executed but no ornaments are seen on them. The first finger of the right hand, which should have been in the *sūcī* pose is missing. The left hand holds a small receptacle intended for receiving the divine milk. The fingers are done in a lifelike manner. There is only a single necklace of simple workmanship on the neck with pendants of a tooth-like

design, a circle and a crescent hanging from it. The waist-band of a simple cord with its ends shaped into heart-like designs is very interesting. That this is a development over the same detail met with in the Mārkaṇḍeya figure (Fig. 115) is obvious. The manner in which the ends are shown hanging on the left thigh and the graceful knotting with a loop above is simply superb. The only other ornament of anklets is also noteworthy because it is of the *taṇḍai* type probably hollow and rattling. Even today, this is the type of anklets with which the babies especially the male ones, of Tamil-nāḍ are decked. The presence of this ornament in a 11th century A.D. bronze proves the antiquity of the practice of decking babies. Coming to the pedestal, the figure stands on a *padmāsana*-like pedestal which has been moulded together with the *bhadrāsana*. The former does not show the details clearly. The latter has mouldings of a new variety. Instead of the roll-mouldings sharp-edged mouldings are seen here. On either side of this is an oblong socket, intended to receive the *prabhā*.

On account of the developed form of the pedestal and the other features, which are characteristic of sculptures belonging to the beginning of the 11th century A.D. this bronze could not be included along with the Naṭeśa and Somāskanda bronzes from the same place examined above. An important factor to be mentioned here is that during the time to which the two latter bronzes are assigned, no bronzes representing the saints seem to have been made and this practice is known to have become popular only from the time of Rājarāja I. This figure may be taken as one of the earliest examples of bronzes of this category. Significantly this is of Jñānasambanda, who is one of the few most important Śaivite saints. Bronzes representing the other well-known saints namely Appar, Sundarar and Māṇikkavācakar belonging to this period have not been noticed due to paucity of known examples. But, as we have said elsewhere,[1] a rare representation in stone of Appar together with one of Jñānasambanda, has been known from a period at least a few decades earlier than the beginning of the 11th century A.D.

A number of magnificent bronzes were discovered in 1952 in the village of Tiruveṇkāḍu in the Tanjore District. They consisted of a Kalyāṇasundara group, a Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti group, a Bhairava and a Bhikshāṭana. They are now in the Tanjore Art Gallery, Tanjore. Recently another find of equally interesting bronzes was made in the same village. They have been added to the collection of bronzes in the Madras Museum. Of these, the most important are a Chaṇḍikeśvara, an Ardhanārī and a Somāskanda. The Chaṇḍikeśvara being in an earlier tradition, it has already been dealt with above (p. 140; Fig. 84). By themselves each one of them is of great value for a study of the history of the art; their importance has become greater owing to the fact that some of

[1] P. R. Srinivasan, *Important Works of Art of Early Chola period from near Tanjore* in Transactions of the Archæological Society of South India, Vol. II, pp. 56-59; Figs. 10 and 11.

the inscriptions in the Śiva temple at the village, belonging to the reigns of Rājarāja Choḷa I and his successors, speak about the donation of such bronzes as well as of provisions made for their worship, which when read with the style of the figures, may be taken to refer to the very bronzes under study. It is of great interest for our study to know that detailed references relating to bronzes representing these and other deities are contained in the inscriptions in the Big Temple at Tanjore, belonging to Rājarāja I and his son's time.[1] The images belonging to the earlier find have been written upon by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran in *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 3 and 4, pp. 55–62, under the title of *Bronze images from Tiruveṇkāḍu-Śvetāraṇya* (*Tanjore District*). He has the following to say about the inscriptions mentioning the bronzes:—

".....the actual date for the bronzes noticed here is supplied by four inscriptions, numbers 449, 450, 456 and 457 of 1918 (of the *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*). Number 449 is an inscription of Rājarāja I dated in the twenty-eighth year of his reign (1013 A.D.). It records gift of gold for offerings to Āḍa-vallār (Naṭarāja) in the temple of Tiruveṇkāḍuḍaiyār by Kūttan Vīraṇiyār, a queen of the king. This image of Āḍa-vallār or Naṭarāja is not included in the present group of bronzes under description, but the bronze image in the local temple which is now under worship and which is a masterpiece of early Choḷa art is probably the one referred to in the inscription. Inscription No. 450 of 1918 which is a record of Rājakesari Rājādhirāja I, issued in the thirtieth year of his reign (1048 A.D.) records that Amalaṇ Seyyavāyār set up an image of Pichchadevar, gave lands for its requirements, presented gold and silver ornaments to it, opened a charity house (*śālai*) and provided for its maintenance. We have thus the date 1048 A.D. for one of the bronze images in this group, which according to the inscription represented Picheha-devar. Picheha-deva is the Tamil for Bhikshāṭanamūrti. Inscription No. 451 of 1918 refers to the gift of gold and silver ornaments to this image of Bhikshāṭana by the same donor. Inscription No. 456 of 1918 which is a record of the twenty-sixth year of Rājarāja I (1011 A.D.) relates to the gift of money for offerings and jewels to the image of Vṛishabhavāhana-deva set up in the temple by Kolakkavan. Inscription No. 457 of 1918 which is a record of the same Rājarāja I in the twenty-seventh year of his reign (1012 A.D.) records the actual setting up of a copper image of the goddess to Vṛishabhavāhana-devar by persons of the *Rājarāja-jananātha-teriñjaparivāra*. Vṛishabhavāhana-deva (we shall prefer to call the image by the name given in the inscription) was made in the year 1011 A.D., the *devī* or goddess to this image was added in 1012 A.D. to constitute a complete set of Vṛishabhavāhana-deva with consort, that an image of Naṭarāja or Āḍa-vallār was already in existence in the temple in 1013 A.D. and that the image of Bhikshāṭana or Picheha-devar was added in 1048 A.D. to the temple

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, pp. 29–41.

series of images when Rājakesari Rājādhirāja I (1018-1054 A.D.) was on the Choḷa throne. It will also be seen that three of the important images, Vṛishabhavāhana-deva and his *devī* and Āḍa-vallār (Naṭarāja) were actually set up for worship in the local temple in the reign of the great Choḷa king, Rājarāja I (985-1014 A.D). If we remember that the earliest inscription in the local temple is of Parāntaka I (952 A.D.) and the latest so far as our study relating to the images under discussion is concerned is 1048 A.D. it is fairly certain that all the images found in 1952 while ploughing the field will have to fall in a period between 952-1048 A.D., or roughly 100 years." [1]

From the long quotation given above the dates of the Vṛishabhavāhana group (1011-12 A.D.) and of the Bhikshāṭana (1048 A.D.) are known. The latter will therefore have to be dealt with below in the proper context. But the dates of the Kalyāṇasundara group and of the Bhairava are not known. On the basis of the style, these two may also be said to date from the last years of Rājarāja I's reign. Of these the Kalyāṇasundara may be said to be earlier by a few years than the Vṛishabhavāhana-deva. Hence we may examine that set first. It may be said at the outset, that amongst the thousands of specimens of the art of the various periods, there is hardly a group of bronzes equal in merit to these two sets which may therefore be said to be unique.

The group of Kalyāṇasundara consists of four bronzes. [2] Here Pārvatī is given in marriage to Śiva by Vishṇu, her brother, accompanied by Lakshmī. It is of interest to note that setting up of Kalyāṇasundara images seems to have been very much in vogue especially during Rājarāja I and Rājendra I's time as testified to by inscriptions[3] in the Big Temple at Tanjore. Fig. 126

Śiva, is holding up, with his lower right hand, the right hand of Pārvatī standing to his right. To her right is seen Lakshmī with arms in the significant posture of presenting Pārvatī to Śiva. Beyond Lakshmī stands Vishṇu with his emblems in the upper hands and the lower hands in the posture of giving away. The pose of the right hand suggests that it is intended to hold something (possibly *a kuṇḍikā* or spouted water vessel) and the left hand is in the *dāna* (giving) pose here meaning the giving away of his sister Pārvatī in marriage to Śiva.

In size the figure of Śiva is the biggest of the group as required by the context where he is the most important deity. The figure of Vishṇu is slightly smaller than Śiva. The figure of Pārvatī is shorter than Śiva, her height including the crown coming only upto the ears of Śiva. The figure of Lakshmī is likewise shorter than Vishṇu and hence it is the smallest of the four.

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[1] *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 3-4, pp. 55-56.
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XVIII, Fig. 3.
[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 30.

Śiva in the present context is called as Kalyāṇasundara, *i.e.*, the handsome bridegroom. He stands in slight *tri-bhaṅga* pose which is at once beautiful and majestic. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is high and extremely well finished. It bears at the top the usual flower which however, has obviously become dwindled into insignificance. The other emblems such as the crescent, the *Dātura* flower and the skull too are not in evidence. Though these are his emblems and should be prominently represented, their subordination is apparently due to the fact that they do not quite fit into the extremely pleasant and auspicious context. The pronged ornaments are seen both in front and on the sides of the crown. Between the fillet which is worked with tassels and the *makuṭa*, there is the usual depression where there are lines suggesting the braided hair. *Makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears. Usually there will be a *patra-kuṇḍala* in one of the ears and the other ear will be either empty or bear a *makara-kuṇḍala*. The presence of *makara-kuṇḍalas* in both ears is again due to the context where he should be shown as a handsome bridegroom decked appropriately. The face is round and nose, lips and chins are beautifully depicted. The sharpness of the nose is however noteworthy. The forehead is narrow but the third eye on it is clearly seen. The eyes are marked by almond-like sockets and the eye-brows are soft and wide. Appropriately enough the expression is one of supreme joy.

On the neck, which is rather short, are three necklaces of which the middle one is beaded or pearly and long. It hangs down with a beautiful median loop bearing the tooth-like ornament. As we have said above, this long *hāra* is a special characteristic of Śiva. The broad necklace is gem-set. The *yajñopavīta* shows a short strand going below the right chest and a long strand hanging low. The third strand met with in some of the early figures is absent from this, although it is present in the Vishṇu of this group. The double-bell clasp over the left chest shows the usual loop with a pendent thread. The *udara-bandha* is broad and stiff and it is noteworthy that no tassels are seen in it while in the Vishṇu of this group they are seen.

The style of the entire figure is superb and that of the torso is exquisite in spite of the fact that by now, certain amount of stiffness had become a characteristic of the treatment of the masses and the lines which were more supple in earlier periods. The shoulders are broad and powerful without any trace of angularity. Graceful curls of hair are seen on them. Besides, the usual pendant which hangs from a chain, is seen on the right shoulder.

The arms are also in the same beautiful style. *Keyūras* with prongs on top are on the arms and they are decorated at their bottom with tassels. Below the *keyūras* is seen the elbow ornament. It is not so prominent here. Three *valayas* adorn each of the wrists. The upper hands hold *paraśu* and deer respectively. The lower right hand is in

the *pāṇigrahaṇa* pose, holding the right hand of Pārvatī, while the corresponding left hand is in *kaṭaka* pose. The gestures of the hands have been executed in a naturalistic manner.

The legs are modelled powerfully; but the power is kept well under control by means of the refined lines and rounded modelling. The bend of the right side of the figure has necessitated the bending of the right leg slightly and this has been dealt with by the *sthapati* deftly. The turning of the right foot towards the right side has enhanced the charm of the figure. The left leg is firm. But there is a slight projection on the left hip brought about by the bend towards the right side. Coming to the loin-cloth it is done in the wave-over-wave form met with in a number of early figures most notably in the Vṛishabhavāhana group from Śivapuram and the Trivikrama figure from Siṅgānallūr. Two short ends of the loin-cloth are seen between the thighs and their tips after taking a sharp curve towards the end are attached to the left thigh. Interestingly the girdle proper is broad and worked with floral designs and it shows an ornate *śṁha-mukha* clasp in front. There are three other beaded strings round the waist, of which the upper-most one starts from the head of the lion-face. The loops issuing out of this face enclose the thick clasps of the three strings. The *pādasaras* of the figure are also nicely executed.

At the back[1] the *jaṭā-makuṭa* shows the pronged ornament on this side also which Fig. 127
is novel. The petalled *śiraś-cakra* is enclosed within a rim leaving openings between it and the tips of petals. As usual a simple tassel hangs from the central knob. The most interesting detail seen here is the braided locks that hang over the back of the neck. While the manner of showing the locks in twisted form has been noticed in bronzes belonging to much earlier times, here the locks are long and wavy and their ends are twisted into two deep curls. There are thirteen such locks. It may be noted here that the pendent ornament usually seen in the midst of these locks is absent in this figure although in some other figures of this collection it is present, most conspicuously in the Pārvatī accompanying this Śiva and in the Vishṇu of this group itself. The other details are as usual very clearly seen here, amongst which the clasp of the girdle is noteworthy. The tucked-up end of the cloth which is seen in the middle of the waist is atrophied.

As will be seen below, the modelling of this figure as well as the other figures of this collection is slightly heavy, and their decorations are rather ornate. This deficiency has been made good by the beautiful pose and enchanting rhythm of the lines of the figures. This may be due to the fact that these pieces were made under direct orders of the emperor.

[1] *Ibid*, Pl. XIX, Fig. 4.

The figure of Pārvatī may be said to be a gem of its kind on account of the flowing rhythm of its bodily lines, the delicate treatment of the ornaments, the beautiful *bhaṅga* which is rightly emphasised a little more than usual in order to suit the context of marriage, tender and soft features and the subtle but significant expression of shyness characteristic of a young Indian lady whose hand is being held for the first time by her lord (*pati*). As though to make this figure the cynosure of the whole group, the *sthapati* with a poetic vision, had bestowed special attention on the limbs especially the arms and the fingers by showing them a little more elongated than necessary. The most conspicuous limb of Pārvatī which is in the centre of the composition of these two figures, namely the left arm of which the hand might have held the *līlā-kamala* (sportive lotus) is also the most delicately executed part, as is evidenced by the beautiful manner in which the bend of the elbow as well as the tender fingers are depicted.

The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* shows three tiers with knob on top and it is decorated on all sides with the pronged ornaments. Fillet is thick and worked like a row of petals and it projects deeply. The features of the face are sharp but beautiful and there are *makara-kuṇḍalas* in the ears. A broad necklace bounded on either side by a thin one is seen on the neck, where there is yet another cord tied closely showing a small ornament in front, probably representing the *māṅgalya-sūtra*. The *yajñopavīta* is three stranded but the strands are shown together. It passes through the collapsing breasts without making any waves. Its workmanship is simple. The treatment of the torso and the breasts is perfect and the shoulders are well finished suggesting youthfulness and vigour. Curly strands of hair fall on them, while the pendent ornament, usually seen on male figures and also in the *devīs* of the Śrīnivāsa group from Sirupaṇaiyūr discussed above, is also present here and its curve adds charm to that part of the figure. Arms, as has been said above, are well executed including the ornaments. The *keyūras* are prominent and they show tassels below them. But here also the *vāji-bandha* (elbow ornament) is simple and it does not show any prominent projecting piece on the outside. Here in this figure are seen *valayas* made into a series, integrated by means of cross-bands.

The part below the waist is exceedingly well executed. The *ati-bhaṅga* of the right leg has been rendered in a masterly fashion. *Pādasaras* and rings on toes are present. The lower garment is done in the same style as the loin-cloth of Śiva. One end of it hangs on the left thigh. It is shown in graceful wavy form. On the right thigh a ribbon is seen. The other end of the cloth hangs between the legs and its tip, also worked in wavy form, is attached to the left leg, and it reaches beyond the curving hem of the garment seen on the legs. *Uttarīya* is distinctly seen tied round the waist and there are pearly strings going over it. There is no median loop in front.

The back view of this fine bronze shows the usual details. But the interesting ones amongst them are the two rows of twisted strands of hair shown one over the other and

the long pendent ornament hanging from the neck. An appreciation of the exquisite beauty of the modelling of the entire figure is possible more from this side than from the front side. The lines of the sides, the life-like buttocks and the bent right leg which looks as if endowed with life are points especially noteworthy. Both figures stand on a simple rectangular metal plate. These two alone form a marvellous group and may be compared only to the other group of Vṛishabhavāhana and Pārvatī (Fig. 128) to be noticed below. But their magnificence is enhanced by the equally well finished Vishṇu and Lakshmī which form the subsidiary group in the composition which looks more like a tableaux by these gods and goddesses in their physical presence than sculptural representation in metal.

The figure of Vishṇu stands in *ābhaṅga* pose and its various other features go to suggest a gentle movement. No doubt the *kirīṭa-makuṭa*, like the *jaṭā-makuṭa* of Śiva, is ornate. But its details show clearly that it is only slightly more evolved than the *kirīṭa* of Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123). The face is somewhat small compared to the fully grown body. Perhaps it is merely an illusion caused by the big *kirīṭa* on the head. Anyway like the face of Śiva, this is also not only beautifully modelled but also expressive of great joy quite appropriate to the occasion.

The same types and number of necklaces as seen in the Śiva are also seen here; but here, instead of the dangling *hāra*, a circular *kaṇṭhī* is seen and it hangs below the two *kaṇṭhīs*. *Yajñopavīta* of this Vishṇu is of the archaic type but the hanging strand is thinner compared to the other two. The clasp is done in a delicate manner. The *udara-bandha* is broad and shows for the first time a few small tassels pendent from its lower side, a feature which develops further as is evidenced by the *udara-bandha* of the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 121). The earlier bronzes where this detail has been met with is the Tiruvaraṅguḷam Naṭeśa (Fig. 107). A strand of curly hair is seen on the right shoulder. A very interesting detail is seen on the right chest. It is the mole-like thing in silver in the form of an isocelles triangle. It is obviously the *Śrīvatsa* mark. A similar mark was noticed in Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123). The fact that it is of silver makes us sceptical whether it was originally added or not. Even supposing that the silver mole was not there, that there should have existed on this spot a similar mole modelled together with the figure may be considered as more than probable because of the presence of a similar mark on the right chest of Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam mentioned above and by the presence of a symbolic representation of Śrī on several other early Vishṇu figures as well.

The arms are adorned with ornaments similar to those of Śiva. The interesting details seen here are the discus and conch, held in the upper hands. Their forms and the flames on their fringes are obviously simple although their workmanship is a step more

evolved than that in which the same emblems of the Vishṇu mentioned above are delineated.

As regards the part below the waist, the chief points of interest are the ends and bows of cloth on either side, which are worked in a manner that a gentle movement is suggested by them and it is therefore different from the stiff manner of treatment of the same details in the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. Though the treatment of the girdle and waist-bands including the median loop in somewhat more ornate than that of the same details of Peruntoṭṭam Vishṇu, the *simha-mukha* clasp, the monoliform tassels hanging from the sash on the thighs and the workmanship of the *kaccha* seen between the legs are in a style which seems to have exerted its influence in the making of the Vishṇus of subsequent periods. The naturalistic wave-over-wave form of the garment of these figures may be said to be due merely to a tendency to depict the detail in its ancient form so as to invest the figures with authority as well as to show off the knowledge of the *sthapati* in the older traditions of the art. For he was making images not for ordinary people but to royal orders.

At the back, the details to be specially noted are the arrangement of the twisted locks of hair and the pendent ornament. It is interesting to note that the curls of hair are not bound by any ornamental ring a feature which is prominently seen in the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. The pendant obviously is set with gems. Another interesting detail seen here is the clasp in the *yajñopavīta* which is just a copy of the clasp on the other side. This feature is not usually met with in bronzes of this kind. The *śiraś-cakra* is similar to that of the Śiva of this group.

The figure of Lakshmī is done after Pārvatī of this group. But as required by its iconography certain details not seen in the Pārvatī are present here. They are the *kuca-bandha* the *patra-kuṇḍalas* and the *channavīra*. A significant detail namely the *māṅgalya-sūtra* seen in Pārvatī is absent from this bronze, and the reason for this absence is not known. Amongst the other details common to both the figures, certain variations are noticed in this figure. In the place of the fillet with petal-like design on it seen on the head of Pārvatī, a thick garland of flowers is found here. While the *keyūra* with prongs is seen in Pārvatī, here an ingenious combination of *nāga-valaya* and *keyūra* of that type is seen; because in the place of the serpent-hood-like floral head of the ornament, prongs are depicted here. The series of *valayas* is not framed by bands. The hanging end of the garment is seen here on the right thigh. And the arms of Lakshmī as mentioned already are stretched to the left side where Pārvatī should stand, in the attitude of presenting her to Śiva. At the back, the thick band pertains to the *kuca-bandha*. The two strings of the *channavīra* are carried up to the fringe of the series of locks of hair where they are joined to a knot. An short ornamental thread hangs from this knot. It may be

pointed out here that this feature has already been seen in the *devīs* of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam where there is also a ring round the curls of hair on the neck which is absent from the Lakshmī under discussion. Since in every other respect the figure of Lakshmī is similar to Pārvatī it may be said to be a slightly smaller copy of Pārvatī.

We shall examine the other group of bronzes consisting of two extraordinarily beautiful items representing Vṛishabhavāhana and his consort. An earlier bronze representation of the theme from Taṇḍantoṭṭam (Fig. 67) has already been noticed. The present group shows interesting variations of details. For instance, the headdress of Śiva is in the form of a turban of *jaṭās* of exquisite beauty; the right side is bent to lean against the bull which is missing; and the right leg is crossed against the left leg. Besides these, the *tri-bhaṅga* pose, the heavy modelling and the ornateness of decorative details all go to show that the style of this group is certainly more advanced than that of the Taṇḍantoṭṭam group. Fig. 128

The posture of this two-armed Śiva is apparently beautifully poised. Not only is the *jaṭā-bandha* executed in an exceedingly original and ingenious manner thus making it a unique example of a *jaṭā-bandha* but the way in which the crescent and the *Dātura* flower are shown is also interesting. Just as in the case of Kalyāṇasundara, here also these emblems have been depicted in a very insignificant manner as is evidenced by the utter subsidiary position given to them. On the other hand, the attention bestowed on the *jaṭās* is so minute that even from their roots they are clearly delineated. Hence we are able to see the beginnings of the *jaṭās* in the deep space that exists between the fillet and the *bandha* of the *jaṭās*. The face is round and its features are similar to those of Kalyāṇasundara discussed above. But the eye balls are indicated here by means of incised circles. Right ear is empty while the left one bears a simple *patra-kuṇḍala*. The expression suggests calmness although a subtle smile seems to beam through the sensitive lips.

On each shoulder there is an exceedingly beautiful curly strand of hair. The other ornaments are similar to those of Kalyāṇasundara. However no *keyūras* are present here, and only a single *valaya* adorns each wrist. The *yajñopavīta* is of a single strand. It is another variation of the same *motif* and its interest lies in the fact that in a single compact group itself, the same *motif* is represented in three different forms. It shows the usual clasp over the left chest. It hangs without any waves in it. The *udara-bandha* of this figure too does not show any tassels hanging from it. Though the treatment of the loin-cloth in both this and the Kalyāṇasundara is the same, here the two ends of the cloth that hang between the thighs are much shorter and they are attached to the right thigh. Besides, the *simha-mukha motif* not only does not show any strings projecting from its head but its treatment is slightly different from that of the *motif* occurring in

the other figure. In fact its refinement is superb. This seems undoubtedly to have been derived from the motif occurring in the four-armed Avalokiteśvara from Kadri (Fig. 103) noticed above. Moreover, the waist-bands are not so ornate as those of the Kalyāṇa-sundara although the girdle is.

Fig. 129 It is the back view that displays the full glory of the *jaṭā-bandha* and the simple but charming pattern made out of it. The braided locks with three deep curls at their tips hanging on the back add beauty to the entire *motif* which consequently becomes not only a unique specimen but a marvellous one at that. It may be noted that here too the pendant usually seen amidst such long braided locks, is absent. The tucked-up end of the garment seen in the middle of the waist is somewhat large here. The other point to be noted in this side is its utter simplicity of treatment which brings out completely the greatness of the master *sthapati* who was responsible for this bronze.

The *padmāsana* shows simple and beautiful petals of lotus. The tips of the petals forming the upper series are not shown thick while those of the lower course are emphasised. There is a thin line separating two successive petals of the lower course. Even here, of the two courses of petals, the lower one, compared with the upper course, is broader and its petals prominent. The treatment of the upper course in an insignificant manner seems to be a characteristic of the traditions of this period and one which seems to have persisted in the subsequent periods too. As has been said above, this was probably made in 1011 A.D. according to the evidence of an inscription.

The figure of Pārvatī of this group is larger than the Pārvatī of the Kalyāṇasundara group. It stands in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose. But it shows nearly all the details found in the latter and in the same style. A few differences are seen between them. Most important of them is that while the latter Pārvatī is so worked as to suggest that it represents a teen-aged maid, the features of this figure suggest that here Pārvatī is represented as an adult woman. Secondly, like the Lakshmī, this figure too does not possess the *māṅgalya-sūtra* which is rather strange. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* shows five tiers with a knob on top, and it tapers in a sharp conical fashion. This is probably a descendant of the *karaṇḍa-makuṭas* of the *devīs* of Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. No bows or flowing ends of cloth are present on either side, but a slender ornamental thread hangs on each thigh. Elbow ornament of this figure shows a piece projecting out. At the back, the *śiraś-cakra* is of the type which is characteristic of this group. But the twisted strands of hair are in a thick cluster and the tassel hanging from them, though small, is delicately worked. The manner in which the waist-bands and the tucked-up end of cloth in the middle of the waist are worked is praiseworthy. Above all the bends of the legs and the poses of the hands are exquisitely finished. But the sharp band introduced at the left side of the trunk in order to give prominence to the hip seems to have caused some angularity in

the line and thus has slightly impaired the beauty of the otherwise perfectly poised figure.

The *padmāsana* of Pārvatī is somewhat different in workmanship from that of the Vṛishabhavāhana. While in the latter figure the petals are naturalistic, and do not show any groove incised along the margin of each petal, the petals of this figure have each a marginal line. That it occurs side by side with a type of petals without any marginal lines is noteworthy. In such figures as the *devīs* of Peruntoṭṭam Vishṇu, this feature is unmistakably seen. From this combination, it may be inferred that sometimes the main figures of a group are shown with *padmāsana* of which the petals are without grooves on their margin while the *padmāsanas* of subsidiary figures have petals with the marginal lines. An additional square plate is also found in this figure. According to another inscription this bronze is said to have been made in 1012 A.D. The uniqueness of this group has already been stressed. Indeed this is a marvel and can stand comparison with any best work of sculpture of the world.

Now we shall briefly deal with the Bhairava. In respect of workmanship, as has been said above, this is in the same style as the bronzes of the two groups discussed above. But its iconography has necessitated the introduction of some new details not met with in any of the figures previously examined. Fig. 130

The eight-armed Bhairava is another interesting bronze of this period the like of which has not been met with. It stands erect, *i.e.*, in *sama-bhaṅga* posture. The other details peculiar to this figure are the following :—

The braided locks of hair are arranged in the form of heart and it serves the purpose of a *bhā-maṇḍala* (halo) too. A knob-like projection is seen on the head. On one side is seen a serpent and on the other the crescent and the *Dātura* flower. Six tassels are seen, three on each side of the *jaṭā-maṇḍala*. The fillet with the gem, consists of flower designs. *Patra-kuṇḍalas* are seen in both the ears. The *raudra* or terrific aspect associated with this icon, is attempted to be depicted by means of the knitting of the eye-brows, wide open eyes and the small canine teeth. But as was customary with ancient *sthapatis* to introduce benign qualities in the representation of terrific themes, here too the *sthapati* had depicted the details in the same fashion which goes to make the bronze pleasant-looking rather than terrible-looking. Even the knitting of the eye-brows, in the context of features expressive of joy, seems to add charm to this expression rather than striking terror.

The necklaces and the pendent ornament on the right shoulder are of the same type as those of the above figures and this affords a proof for its grouping with them. The *yajñopavīta* is made of two strands, twisted like a rope. Besides, a long *mālā*

or garland similar to the long garland seen in a Vishṇu figure is depicted. It seems to be a string made up of small globules. Perhaps they represent severed heads, in which case this becomes a *muṇḍa-mālā*. No tassels are present in the *udara-bandha*. This figure shows two serpents with their bodies twisted and wound round the waist. Further their hoods are converted into decorative pieces adorning the thighs. The manner of showing them hanging on the thighs is superb.

Arms are displayed in fan-wise series on either side, and the manner of their attachment to one another is beautiful. The armlets are of actual *nāga-valayas* and in no other bronzes armlets of this kind are seen. Except the three hands namely the upper-most right hand, the corresponding left hand and the lowermost left hand which hold respectively, a *ḍamaru*, a bell and a bowl, the rest are in *kaṭaka* poses. At the back the interesting details to be noted are the arrangement of the *ūrddhva-keśa* in a beautiful big bud-like form as seen in the Māheśvarī figure noticed above and the hanging locks of hair with twisted tips. These two details are again noteworthy as showing its position after the above bronzes. The pendant is absent from this figure. The series of arms seen one below the other in the depth of each side is impressive.

The figure stands on a *padmāsana* which is similar to that of the Vṛishabhavāhana. But here its upper course is slightly larger. A *bhadrāsana* with simple mouldings supports this *padmāsana* and both of them are moulded together.

It would have been clear by now how remarkably able were the *sthapatis* of ancient times; because a variety of difficult and intricate themes which are in the nature of testing their capacity, imagination and above all the genius of even a master artist have not only been taken up for execution but also have been represented in such a manner as the success achieved in it by these *sthapatis* is astounding, in spite of the fact that the modelling of the figures appears to be slightly below standard.

Fig. 131 Now we shall examine the two images belonging to the recent find. Of these the Ardhanārī ht. 90 *cm*; *br.* 47.5 *cm* may be said, even at the outset, to be another unique bronze. This is the earliest specimen representing this aspect of Śiva in bronze so far known. The Madras Museum has already got an Ardhanārī[1] but it is of little consequence except for its iconography. The bronze under discussion is of great interest both for its iconography and for its artistic qualities. In fact, if this is compared with any one of the stone Ardhanārī figures from Kumbhakoṇam, Tiruvirāmīśvaram etc., the striking correspondence that exists between this and them can be easily seen, which goes a long way in affording a basis for the attribution of the figure to this period.

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 116-117.

The figure stands on a *padmāsana* in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose. As is usual in these images two arms are present on the right side which is of Śiva while only one arm is seen on the left side which is of Pārvatī. Of the former two arms, the lower one is shown in the pose of leaning against the Nandi which is however missing from the group. In relief sculptures showing Ardhanārī the Nandi will be seen invariably. In view of the fact that this bronze is in the round, the figure of Nandi which must have been also in the round, similar to the Nandi of the Vṛishabhavāhana group from Taṇḍantoṭṭam, has not been found along with the bronze under discussion. The left arm is held as usual in the posture of holding a mirror, a concomitant detail of an Ardhanārī sculpture. The rendering of the arm is extremely beautiful and the fingers are especially noteworthy for their tenderness and realistic delineation. The *makuṭa* as required by the theme is of half-*jaṭā* and of half-*karaṇḍa*. It is as usual surmounted by a blossomed flower and is decorated with the pronged ornament. The face is rather squarish. But due to the manner of portrayal of the nose, it seems to swell out into a slight ovate form. Interestingly each side is depicted different from the other, according to the requirements of the sex. Though this is a special feature of Ardhanārī figures in general, the prominence and distinction given to it in this particular instance are significant and they add to the exquisite beauty of the bronze. Of the ornaments the noteworthy ones are the *kaṇṭhīs*, the *yajñopavīta*, the *nāga-valaya* type of armlets, the beaded *vāḻī-bandha* and the curved pendant seen on the right shoulder only. Interestingly only in the left arm and the left ankle are seen the series of *valayas* as are seen in female figures. The breast on the left side is a full one and it is in the style of the period. The modelling of the torso has remarkably succeeded in achieving a balance between the two sides of it, with the result that what would otherwise have become uncouth and unsightly has been turned into a wonderful work of art.

The beauty of the piece is however due to the manner in which the hip portion, especially of the left side *i.e.*, of the female side, is portrayed. The *bhaṅga* introduced here is graceful and charming in spite of the slight over contraction of the line near the *udara-bandha*. As required by the hermaphrodite figure shorts are seen on the right thigh while there is the regular garment reaching to the ankle on the left leg. This garment is depicted with a number of parallel lines representing its folds as are seen in the Vishṇu (Fig. 123) from Peruntoṭṭam and Pārvatī (Fig. 128) from Tiruveṇkāḍu. The *siṁha-mukha* clasp is interesting as it is definitely of the developed type; but the style of hanging of the garment on the left thigh is interesting. In order to project the left side, the right leg is bent slightly at the knee which is however realistically done. The beauty of the modelling of the figure is exemplified by the right leg.

The back view of this marvellous bronze gives a glorious view of the figure. Here Fig. 132
it is that one easily recognises the half female and half male character of the deity because

of the delineation, on the left and right sides, of the respective features, such as the shorts, two-tiered curly hair, the slender arm, the emphasised hip and the *sāri* of the left side and the long strands of hair, powerful arms and shoulders and the not so much emphasised hip of the right side. The other interesting details seen on this side are the pendant and the knot of the *yajñopavīta*. The figure stands on a beautiful *padmāsana*. Though the petals are not very clear, the very lines forming them suggest the quality of workmanship. This, together with the good proportions makes the pedestal a good specimen of its kind. The square holes on it are intended to securely fasten the figure by means of ropes to wooden carriers while it is taken out in procession.

Fig. 133 The Somāskanda from the same place is interesting in its own way. That the figures of this group possess a majority of the characteristics met with in the above mentioned bronzes is easily seen. But the facial features of the two figures of Śiva and Umā of this group are quite distinct, as also the style of their headgears. Moreover, Śiva is attaired in an elaborate fashion with a garment showing numerous folds on it like a Vishṇu figure. The same type of garment is seen in the Umā also. Owing to this feature, this group seems to be ornate compared to the other bronzes from the same place discussed above.

The most interesting figure of the group is the baby Skanda standing in between his parents. According to the practice, the baby is shown as plumpy but nevertheless the proportions are good. Further the expression in the face and other features make the figure a fine realistic study. The stunted *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* and the loosely hanging ends of the waist-cord with *kiṅkiṇīs* are noteworthy.

All the three figures are seated on a long *bhadrāsana* which is almost identical with the *āsana* of the Chaṇḍikeśvara discussed above. Interestingly the part of the *āsana* on which Śiva is seated is of a larger size than that on which Umā is seated. This is a peculiarity not met with in any other Somāskanda. Thus in several respects these bronzes are valuable examples of the art of the period and they afford interesting points for the study of iconography, modelling and decoration.

Fig 134 The next bronze that may, with reason, be attributed to this period is the magnificent Śiva, ht. about 108 *cm*, of which two good views have been shown on Pl. X in the *Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. VI and commented upon by Mr. S. Gopalachari.[1] It stands in an elegant *dvi-bhaṅga* posture with the two lower hands in purposeful postures and the two upper hands holding respectively *paraśu* and *mṛiga*.

[1] Mr. Khandalavala has recently dealt with this piece as being in a private collection in Bombay in *Mārg*, Vol IV, No. 4, pp. 8-9. The cover page of the issue of the journal carries a magnificent view of this work of art; besides, it is illustrated as Fig. 1 also, in the article.

Before proceeding to make a detailed examination of the figure, its identification may be considered first. Mr. S. Gopalachari has described it as "Śiva standing as Chandraśekhara (Kevalamūrti)". Obviously, no certainty of identification is possible from the combination of the names of Śiva, Chandraśekhara and Kevalamūrti. This ambiguity in the identification of the figure was perhaps permissible in view of the fact that at the time when this was published so many bronzes as we now know of were not known. Nor were known bronze groups similar to the one in which the bronze in question was the main figure. Amongst the numerous bronzes that have been reported during the last thirty years or more, a number of interesting groups are also found. Of the latter, the groups where Śiva figures in an exactly the same pose as the one in which the present figure is represented, are known to be somewhat popular. These are representations of Śiva's marriage with Pārvatī where Śiva is called as Kalyāṇasundara. A splendid group of this representation from Tiruveṇkāḍu has been noticed above. In this group, besides Śiva and Pārvatī, there are the bride's party namely Vishṇu and Lakshmī also. Another magnificent group of Kalyāṇasundara and Pārvatī (Fig. 140) but without the other two figures is known from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District which is noticed below. On the basis of the significant pose in which Śiva is represented in these groups and the affinity of the pose of the Śiva figure now examined to the pose of Śivas of the above mentioned groups, the present Śiva is identified by us as Kalyāṇasundara. The pose in which the lower right hand is shown may be said to assist the identification because it is in a special variety of *kaṭaka* pose intended to hold the right hand of his bride, Pārvatī.

The first thing that strikes one in this figure is its modelling which is heavy like that of the figures of Tiruveṇkāḍu group and of the saints examined above, although here the heaviness is treated in such a manner as to make it an appropriate and an essential element of the concept of the figure itself. The second noteworthy feature of this bronze is its majestic pose which too is extremely appropriate for the theme represented by the bronze. Kalyāṇasundara represents Śiva as the bride-groom *par excellence* where he has to assume airs and display grandeur in pose. The other details by their refinement and restraint enhance the quality of the bronze.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* has become slightly ornate and is surmounted by the usual flower. The pronged ornament of elaborate workmanship is seen in front of it. The emblems are probably seen on the headdress but not visible. This is noteworthy because in the Kalyāṇasundara from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 126) also the emblems are shown in a subdued fashion and we have said there that it was perhaps required by the context of marriage. The same reason may be applicable here too. The fillet is ornate. The face is beautifully fashioned and the nose has become apparently sharp and is fast approaching the stage of complete conventionalisation. The lips are however sensitive. The eyes are almond-like. The expression in the face is somewhat

serene. Unlike the Kalyāṇasundara from Tiruveṇkāḍu, a simple *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the left ear while the right ear is empty.

There are two necklets on the neck; the upper one is a simple ring and the lower one which is thicker hangs somewhat low and shows a gem-set piece in front. The *yajñopavīta* is treated in a beautiful manner with the usual clasp on the left chest. The gentle wave seen in it is noteworthy. The *udara-bandha* is gem-set in front. The torso is executed with consummate skill. The shoulders are high but not treated so as to display power and strength. The usual flower-decked strands of hair are seen on the shoulders. On the right shoulder is seen the pendent decoration which is beautiful. The arms are beautifully moulded and the style of their joining to the shoulders may be seen to be akin to that of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. In spite of their fine proportions, there are the angularity and the stiffness characteristic of sculptures of the period. The fingers are comparatively short but yet there is the liveliness, a characteristic of ancient traditions. The pronged *keyūras*, simple band-like elbow ornaments and *valayas* in sets of three are seen in the arms and wrists. The absence of the projecting piece from the elbow ornament is noteworthy because although it was an invariable feature in a majority of bronzes belonging to the second half of the period of the school of Parāntaka I, in most of the bronzes belonging to the school of Rājarāja I that have been examined above, this element has been either omitted altogether or shown as a simple band. This vascillation in the depiction of this feature seems to have continued for some time more, for although a great majority of bronzes of later periods do not show the projecting piece in the elbow ornament wherever it is present, in a few cases it is prominently shown as for instance the bigger Kaṇṇappa-nāyanar[1] from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 320). The lower left hand is in *abhaya* while the remaining hands are engaged as mentioned at the beginning. The trunk of the figure is sufficiently inclined to left, which is responsible for the beautiful pose.

The legs are also treated fully in the round although as seen in the two previous examples, the knee-caps are prominent. The flexions in which the legs are shown are well displayed. The loin-cloth seems to be simple and plain. But there are the girdles and waist-bands with the usual *siṁha-mukha* clasp in front worked elaborately. The bow-like details, which are evolved in style, prove this abundantly. Besides, a short, beautifully worked pendant is seen hanging from the waist-band on each thigh while a third pendant is seen in between them. As has been seen above, only one pendant of this type was seen in the Kirātamūrti in the Tanjore Art Gallery (Fig. 74) while a pair of similar ornaments was seen on each thigh of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. While in these two bronzes, they seem to be ends of cloth rather than ornaments, in the

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. XIX, Fig. 4.

present bronze they may be taken to be ornaments and as such the repetition of them is interesting as they occur for the first time in a Śiva figure.

The back view of the figure shows the manner of dressing of the *jaṭās* which is rather geometric in pattern. The *śiraś-cakra* is almost similar to that of Śrīdevī of the Peruntoṭṭam Vishṇu group, but the central knob and the tassel hanging from it are more evolved. The braided hair hanging on the back is interesting. There are five of them and each is beautifully twisted throughout. The display of these five locks is tasteful. More interesting than the treatment of the hair is the treatment of the ring-like ornament that encircles it as in the case of the bronzes of the Vishṇu and Śrīnivāsa groups and others discussed above. This feature has been met with only in one or two Śiva or Śaivite bronzes examined so far and it is therefore interesting to see it in this example also. The ring shows four knobs probably representing gems. The *yajñopavīta* shows a knot in the middle of the back where the shorter strand joins. This is also novel. The other interesting feature noticed in this view is the beautiful modelling of the entire figure that of the buttocks being especially refined and well finished. The magnificent poise of the figure is apparent from this side also. In spite of the fact that the bronze is of this period, the representation being of a very important theme the *sthapati* seems to have put his heart and soul into this work and to have brought to bear on it all his talents as well as the resources of his training in the traditions of the art. As a result of single-minded devotion and concentrated effort backed by a highly disciplined training, the *sthapati* could produce this bronze which may be considered to be a great masterpiece. The magnitude and significance of this achievement gain in importance from the huge size of the figure which is rightly considered to be "one of the largest South Indian bronzes of Śiva known."[1] Fig. 135

The last detail to be noticed of this bronze is the *padmāsana* which is somewhat ornate. Though the petals are broad and naturalistic, the lines in them which have now become pronounced are responsible for the ornate look that they now have. Besides, the evolved nature of the petals is also seen from the emphasis laid on the tips of the petals especially of the subsidiary ones.

It is therefore clear that this bronze is an interesting and important example of the art of the period to which the above Tiruveṇkāḍu pieces are assigned.

The affinity of the Chandraśekhara, about 70 *cm* high, belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Māyūram, Tanjore District, to the Kalyāṇasundara and the bronzes from Tiruveṇkāḍu discussed above is apparent. The bronze, however, represents Śiva as Kevala Chandraśekhara, as indicated by the *sama-bhaṅga* posture. It may have Fig. 136

[1] S. Gopalachari, *Some South Indian Metal Images and their Dhyānas* in J.I.S.O.A., Vol. VI, p. 21.

formed a group with Umā, which is now missing, in which case the group will be called as Umāsahita. A few such interesting groups are going to be noticed below. Here, however, in the absence of the Umā's figure, this may be taken to represent Kevala Chandraśekhara. It may be mentioned here the fact that the setting up of an image of Chandraśekhara is referred to in No. 54 of Tanjore inscriptions (vide *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 34).

A mere look at the figure reveals at once its fine modelling and finer proportions. Except for the somewhat stylised treatment of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* and ornaments, the sharp nose and the slight stiffness of the posture, the figure may be adjudged as one of the superb examples of the art of the period. Amongst its interesting details, the pendant on the right shoulder, the wavy *yajñopavīta*, the ornate *nāga-valaya*-like armlet, the evolved *simha-mukha* clasp on the waist-band, the looped band below the clasp, the subdued but realistic treatment of the emblems and the well-finished *padmāsana* are noteworthy. Of the double ends of cloth hanging on the sides one is shown slightly higher up, a characteristic which becomes a fashion from now on. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the corresponding opposite hand is in *āhūya-varada* poses. Owing to its close resemblance to the above Kalyāṇasundara this bronze may also be assigned to about the same period.

Fig. 137 Now we shall proceed to examine the Naṭeśa[1] under worship in the Big Temple at Tanjore. It is not only a typical example of Naṭeśa of the school of Rājarāja I but also one of the few superb Naṭeśa bronzes so far known. It is characterised by a rare splendour and its magnificence and glory are unsurpassed. The technique employed by the *sthapati* in producing it is marvellous. The ornamentation is tasteful and it is kept at the minimum, a quality which enhances the beauty of the figure. Apparently it is later than the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi but earlier than the Naṭeśas from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu and Puṅganūr to be examined below. From the inscriptions belonging to the time of Rājarāja I engraved on the walls of the Big Temple at Tanjore, built by the king, it is known "that the chief image of the central shrine was called Dakshiṇameru-viḍaṅgaṇ or Lord Āḍavallār"[2] a Tamil term which means the Dancer *par excellence*. The style of this Naṭeśa is characteristic of sculptures of Rājarāja I's time; and its affinity to the stone Naṭeśa found in the western-most niche of the south wall of the central shrine of the Big Temple and to the painted Naṭeśa on the west wall of the sanctum inside, is great and striking. The size of the bronze is huge as it is larger than the Naṭeśas examined so far as well as the other big Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu. This, taken together with the development of the decorative details, shows that it is one of the definite characteristics

[1] O. C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*, Pl. III.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 29.

of bronzes belonging to this school as for instance the Kalyāṇasundara (Fig. 134). There is, therefore, some reason to consider this Naṭeśa as the one which has been referred to as Āḍavallār in the inscriptions mentioned above. In fact Nos. 42 and 51 of Tanjore inscriptions[1] refer to the setting up of Āḍavallār images, before the 29th year of Rājarāja I's time. But this image seems to be different from the ones mentioned in these inscriptions. If this is conceded, which we believe to be a fairly plausible proposition, then its importance as an authentic specimen of the art of bronzes of the school of Rājarāja I becomes very great. It must be mentioned here that this attribution is however based entirely on grounds of style and we, more than any one else, are well aware of the limitations of this kind of dating. It is, therefore, necessary to condition the attribution by saying that so far as the style of the figure as a whole and the workmanship of its details go, they suggest a date about the beginning of the 11th century A.D. for the figure and this may be assumed as fairly correct till the contrary is proved. The details of the figure are as follows:—

The headdress is decorated as usual with the peacock feathers. But unlike the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi where the *makuṭa* form is preserved, here for the first time, they have been shown fan-wise although the high tying up of the feathers still retains a semblance of the *makuṭa* form. There is a thick, twisted rope-like band employed to hold the feathers together at their bottom. The crescent moon is seen on them on the left side. It is not, however, very prominent. But the serpent and the skull are shown in high relief. The *Dātura* flower which is seen on the left side is also not prominent. The place where a fillet is usually seen, is here occupied by another rope-like ornament. The whirling *jaṭās*[2] of which five are seen on each side with three intermediate flower-bearing strands each of which shows a beautiful full-blown flower at its tip. In the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, no such intermediate lock is seen, but significantly a short thread-like detail jutting out from the outermost flower that links two consecutive locks is seen. This is probably the basis for the intermediate locks met with in the present example. It is necessary to mention here the fact that while the two series of designs that are employed in the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi are simple, the same detail has become obviously ornate here. At the root of whirling locks is seen the end of a piece of cloth which is spread out in an artistic manner. It is of great interest to note that in this bronze the figure of *Gaṅgā* is seen as a miniature figure made separately and rivetted to the *prabhā* just above the tip of the upper-most *jaṭā* on the right side. As it does not form an integral part with the figure it is likely that this *Gaṅgā* was added later.

The face is excellently finished although the nose is characteristically sharp and the eyes and the eye-brows, like those of the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, are marked by incised lines.

[1] *Ibid.*, Texts, p. 169 for No. 42 and p. 203 for No. 51.

[2] In No. 42 of Tanjore Inscriptions (*SII*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 53 and Texts, p. 170) refers to Āḍavallār possessing nine *jaṭās* with *Gaṅgā-Bhaṭṭārakī* on them, while here ten *jaṭās* are present. So this seems to be different from the other figure mentioned in the above inscription.

The ears are also characteristically short. In the left ear is seen a naturalistically worked *patra-kuṇḍala*, but the other ear is empty. The expression is suggestive of supreme bliss. The neck is moulded in a manner suggesting strength. A broad *kaṇṭhī* and a long *hāra* of beads which is characteristic of Śiva figures are seen on the neck. The *yajñopavīta* is beautiful and its gentle wavy form is charming. The treatment of the *udara-bandha* is excellent. While preserving the rounded form of the stomach-band found in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, it shows significant differences in details. For instance, the waves of the flowing ends, though beautifully rhythmic in character, show signs of becoming schematic and stylised. The loop on the right side has developed a blade-like form. The space between the two flowing ends has become wider and here is seen a couple of beautiful flowers introduced at regular intervals, making the detail elegant. Moreover, the tips of these ends are decorated each with a similar flower. Only a beginning of this feature was seen in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa. The torso is moulded completely in the round and in an extremely refined fashion. But the constrictions seen in the lines of the sides, particularly in the line of the left side demonstrate in an unmistakable manner that the *sthapati* could not but follow the traditions of the art of the period. The shoulders are executed with great skill and the success achieved by the *sthapati* in depicting them may be said to be marvellous, nay unique. This single feature alone marks out this bronze as a great masterpiece because in none of the Naṭeśas known so far, it has been dealt with so deftly and beautifully. More than the treatment of the shoulders, it is the manner of showing the lower left arm, in the *gaja-hasta* pose, that distinctly proves the greatness of the maker of this bronze. The manner of attachment of this arm to the shoulder shows that the *sthapati* did not at all have any doubts or vascillation. The majestic sway of the lines of the arm as well as the shoulders is singularly beautiful and this is proof positive for the brilliance of the artist. The beautifully tapering arms together with the tender and life-like fingers add greatly to the charm of the figure. The disposition of the arms and their poses are treated likewise with imagination and fine taste. The torso of this figure has been conceived and executed in an exceptionally remarkable manner. A simple strand of hair is seen on each shoulder; but on the right shoulder is seen the usual pendent ornament which is very thin in form. On the left side, in between the shoulders of the two arms, is seen the piece of upper cloth with spread-out end, flowing gracefully. The three arms are beautifully thrown out with ease and confidence. Interestingly no armlets are seen on the arms; nor are seen any elbow ornaments. A pair of thick *valayas* adorns each wrist. The upper right hand holds the *ḍamaru* by the fingers which are spread-out in an interesting fashion. The lower right hand is in the usual *abhaya* pose; and in its forearm is seen the figure of a beautiful serpent, not hanging down as in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa but projecting out with spread-out hood. The wavy tail of this serpent is noteworthy. The arm in *gaja-hasta*

pose is beautifully held and its fingers are especially beautiful, rather a bit exaggerated. The upper left hand holds in its palm a flame in a receptacle which is not very clear. It is to be noted that the hands of both the upper arms are seen to reach slightly beyond the *prabhā*.

The legs are also treated in a splendid manner and the beautiful poise of the figure is due to the deftness with which the balance is effected. Their proportions are commendable. It is in the style of the legs that we see distinctly the imprints of the traditions of the art of the period. The right leg seems to be strong and powerful while the uplifted left leg is slender and graceful. Interestingly thick anklets adorn the right leg while a thin *pādasara* is seen to beautify the left leg. Is this difference indicative of Śiva's hermaphrodite nature? The emphasis laid on the knee-cap and the somewhat stylized treatment of the part below the knee of this leg are instances in point. But the toes are tastefully worked. The loin-cloth is probably simple and plain. But its edge is somewhat raised or marked out by means of incised lines. Simple bands, more than three in number, are wound round the waist. A novel detail is seen in the decoration of the waist-bands. It is the ornament with a pipal-leaf-like pendant at its tip, hanging from the waist-band.

The left leg is lifted up in the characteristic manner which has become almost standardised even in the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi. The right leg is planted on the back of the Apasmāra Purusha. This dwarfish figure is comparatively very small but its treatment is exquisite. The most noteworthy feature of this beautiful little figure is its headdress which is of the *makuṭa* variety, not the usual *jaṭā-maṇḍala* type. Here is another instance proving the originality of the *sthapati*.

The Apasmāra Purusha is lying on a small *padmāsana* with his head towards the proper right. The *āsana* is interesting because of its form. The upper row of petals is small in size while the petals of the lower row are broader and wider than deep. The petals are however are not of the naturalistic type; and their tips are prominent. From the sides of this narrow circular *āsana* rise the props of the *prabhā* which is by far the most interesting detail of this bronze. When this is compared with the *prabhās* examined so far, the originality of treatment of it will become apparent. That this is significantly different in form as well as decoration from the *prabhā* of the immediately preceding Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi is easilly seen. First of all, while the *prabhā* of the latter figure is slightly tilted to the left side, here it has nearly a perfect oval form. Secondly, the thickness of the broad part of it is almost uniform in the *prabhā* of the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, while the *prabhā* under discussion has its prop-like parts tapering in a beautiful manner from bottom upwards. Thirdly, in this part is seen for the first time, an embellishment in the form of marginal lines. Fourthly, the beginnings of these props which are seen at about the middle of the *prabhā* are worked like heads of *yāḷi* which is quite a novel feature. The workmanship of the *yāḷi* heads is interesting as it is almost akin to the style of the *yāḷi* heads of the *yāḷavari* of the Big Temple itself.

Fifthly, the arch is seen divided into two distinct parts, the inner one being thick and the outer one thin. Interestingly the thinner part shows, for the first time, a series of perforations along the margin. Above all, the flames that fringe the *prabhā* are noteworthy. While there are only twenty-nine flames in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa, here there are thirty-two of them. Though the number of the flames is not as such a valuable detail, yet, especially in large Naṭeśas, it seems to play some part. For, in the Kaṇkoḍuttavanitam Naṭeśa,[1] which is certainly later than this Naṭeśa it is thirty-nine; and in the dated Naṭeśa from Belūr[2] it is forty. The larger the number of flames, the less becomes the space between two of them. Consequently they appear to be very crowded. In the present case, however, they are beautifully spaced especially at the bottom, while at the top some amount of crowding of flames is obvious. Besides, the treatment of each flame is interesting. Those on the wider parts are not only short but possess each five tongues. The flames on the arch show each only four tongues except in the case of one or two. The top-most flame is treated in a beautiful manner but unlike the rest it has more than five tongues. Six tongues are easily seen but the budding of the seventh one is slightly visible at its proper left. Thus in every respect this *prabhā* is in advance over that of Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa. At the same time its style forms the basis for a number of later examples of Naṭeśa. Hence its importance.

This remarkable *prabhā* serves as a real adornment for the grand Naṭeśa, which significantly bears witness to the Rājarāja Choḷa's great devotion to the Lord of his family as well as to his singular passion for encouraging the art of bronzes. Regarding its date, it may have been made and presented to the temple as soon as it was completed and consecrated, *i.e.*, somewhere about 1010 A.D. The image of Śivakāmi found along with this seems to belong to a slightly later period.

The pedestal shows signs of having been repaired. It is supported by the four-line Sanskrit inscription in modern Nāgarī characters engraved on it. The inscription says that the image of Nāṭya-rāja was repaired and re-installed by Nāgarāja under the orders of Kamākshī the queen of Śiva-nṛipati (Śivāji ?) on Monday, the fullmoon day of the month (not clear) in the year Tāraṇa of Śaka (not clear).

It is known that Rājarāja and his relatives and successors donated a number of bronzes to the Big Temple, Tanjore.[3] Of these only a few seem to have come down to
Fig. 138 us. The Tripurāntaka and Tripurasundarī[4] bronzes may be said to belong to this category.

The poses of the two lower hands of the male figure are such as to make one mistake it for a representation of Viṇādharamūrti. But the posture in which the figure stands is obviously a variant of *ālīḍha* and this, together with the hand poses gives the clue to the

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. XVII, Fig. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XVI, Fig. 2.
[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Introduction, pp. 29 ff.
[4] These have been removed from the temple to the Tanjore Art Gallery.

identification of the figure as Tripurāntaka certain.[1] This is supported by the existence of the Devī figure by its side. It is well-known that in none of the forms of Dakshiṇā-mūrti Śiva is associated with Devī; while in his other aspects she is invariably present. Here the Devī's association with the figure of Śiva in *ālīḍha* posture is therefore proof positive that the figure represents Tripurāntaka.[2] Another important detail which lends support to this identification is the presence of the dwarf on whose head the Lord has placed his left foot.

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is high and heavy and its details are not very clear. The *paṭṭa* round the forehead is however prominent. The face is round but in its modelling a slight forward projection is apparent. The forehead is almost hidden away. The eye-brows are ridge-like and the eyes are indicated by grooves. The nose is straight and thin. The lips are done in such a manner as to suggest slightly smiling countenance. There is a prominent *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear while the right ear is empty.

There are three *kaṇṭhīs* on the neck which is rather short. The *yajñopavīta* is broad and wavy and has a beautiful knot over the left chest. The *udara-bandha* is broad and thick. The modelling of the trunk is good but it shows stiffening to a slight degree. This is apparent in the nearly straight line of the left side and the somewhat slightly bent line of the opposite side. The chest is comparatively narrow and the shoulders, though powerful, are according to the prevailing practice, drooping. There are the curly strands of hair studded with flowers, on either shoulder. But interestingly only on the right shoulder we see the characteristic pendant.

The arms are thickly moulded. *Nāga-valaya* type of *keyūra* is seen on the upper arms while stiff wristlets adorn the wrists. It is noteworthy that there is no *vājī-bandha* in the arms. *Paraśu* is held in the upper right hand and the deer that should have been held by the corresponding left hand is missing. The lower right hand is in the posture of holding an arrow while the lower left hand is in the pose of holding the bow. Their poses and the fingers are treated skilfully. In order to emphasise the aspect of holding the bow, the two arms of the left side are held high up almost in line with the shoulders.

The lips are moulded in a normal fashion, and the lifting of the left leg has necessitated the bend at the right hip. This has made the line of the right side beautiful, because in the absence of this bend there would have arisen the question of obviating an

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1 C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical* etc., p. 59, Pl. XXVIII-B.

2 O. C. Gangoly has also dealt with this image. See his *South Indian Bronzes*, pp. 62, 63, Pl. I. It must be mentioned that this aspect of Śiva is one of the favourite themes of Rājarāja's time as testified to by the number of stone images of the deity seen on the walls of the temple as well as by the marvellous painting representing the whole scene, inside it.

inartistic vertical line. The slightly bent left leg has produced an angle at the knee, which is not very pleasing to look at. The angularity of the knee gets emphasised by this pose of the leg. Added to that there is the prominent knee-cap, a characteristic feature of bronzes of this period. Like the arms, these legs, too, are heavily and powerfully moulded. Though this feature is appropriate to the theme represented by the bronze, yet it clearly shows the gradual decline in the artistic standards because a slightly slenderer modelling as is seen in the bronzes of the immediately preceding period would have added immensely to the beauty of this piece. The loin-cloth consists of a close-fitting drawer and its thin border suggested by a thin incision is noteworthy. The waist-bands are not very prominent, nevertheless the slightly projecting end of cloth seen on the left hip is interesting. There is the characteristic *simha-mukha* with a wide open mouth. In it are seen three horizontal rows of dots. From below the lowest row issues down the tongue-like flap with pointed tip which curves to the left. Similar detail is met with in many other bronzes examined above. On the feet are *pādaśaras*. As in similar representations of Śiva, here also there are no bows and hanging ends on either side. The left foot is placed on the head of a little seated dwarf whose left arm is lifted up and is in the posture of supporting the toes. The dwarf's right hand is engaged in touching the small foot-rest on which the Lord's right foot rests. The pot-bellied little fellow has a happy countenance which is calculated to indicate that either the Lord does not press hard or that the dwarf is pleased with his lot which is but to serve the Lord till eternity.

Fig. 139 The back side of the figure shows the headdress slightly more clearly. The *paṭṭa* is especially clear. The *śiraś-cakra* is missing. This is rather unfortunate because it is one of the important details which gives a clue to the age of the bronzes. The most interesting decoration on this side consists of the braids of hair which are shown in a beautiful wavy form, each of them twisting at its end, as in the case of the Śiva images of the Tiruveṇkāḍu group. There are thirteen of them which completely hide the back of the neck. This way of showing the braids was characteristic of bronzes of the earlier periods, while in the bronzes of the period with which we are concerned here, each of the braids is shown twisted completely as in the Kalyāṇasundara figure (Fig. 126). The reason for the absence of the pendant is not known but it was not there in some of the figures from Tiruveṇkāḍu also. Showing the locks of hair as in these examples is an ancient practice; and its occurrence here shows the lingering of ancient traditions. (It is just possible that this image was made at the instance of the great monarch Rājarāja I himself, by his state *sthapati* who should have been one of the few masters trained in the traditional methods and who therefore had shown in his works details of workmanship which were characteristic of bronzes belonging to the time of his ancestors. If this is so, he should surely have been rewarded by his master for not having swerved from ancient traditions).

That similar treatment of details is met with in the *devī* figure to be discussed presently adds significance to our hypothesis. Of the other details of interest the beautiful modelling of the figure is apparent from this side. Moreover the arrangement of the arms and the postures in which the legs are shown are really more beautiful in this side than in the front side. The tucked-up end of the garment has however become atrophied.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands is exquisitely finished. The petals are realistic, those of the lower row being broader than those of the upper row which is comparatively insignificant. This manner of depicting the *padmāsana* is another instance to prove that the *sthapati* is following ancient traditions. The petals do not show any marginal lines.

Thus it is an interesting bronze where is seen a commingling of elements inspired by more schools than one.

Now to the figure of *devī*, here called as Tripurasundarī. That it is in the tradition in which the *devī* of the Tiruveṇkāḍu Vṛishabhavāhana group (Fig. 128) is made is apparent. But here are some details worth noticing.

There is a beautiful and highly proportionate *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* with a broad *paṭṭa* at its base. The face is rather round and here the tendency for forward projection of the face is marked. It may be mentioned in passing that this feature is carried to its logical conclusion in some of the bronzes representing *devīs* or women, belonging to subsequent periods as for instance the Śoḷa-mā-devī from Kālahasti (Fig. 168) discussed below. The face is chubby but the expression suggests seriousness rather than smile. Ears are empty. A pair of *kaṇṭhīs* is seen on the neck. *Yajñopavīta* is shown as flowing gently in a wavy form. The torso is exquisitely finished, but its details are somewhat less exuberant than those met with in the *devī* figures belonging to earlier periods. That the image is however an example of the art of the period under study is borne out by the sharply curving lines of the side, the somewhat atrophied bosoms and the stiffness of the left arm in *lola* pose.

The curly strand of hair is seen only on the right shoulder. There are the pronged *keyūras* on the arms; but interestingly they are tied high up. In this bronze are seen the *vājī-bandhas* which are wound round the elbow joint; and they do not show the projecting bits. The modelling of the arms is slender and charming, the pose of the right hand being especially attractive. That the artist has not succeeded quite well in depicting the left hand is easily seen from the rather unnatural turn it takes from the wrist as well as from its fingers which are not very much supple.

The part below the waist is moulded in such a manner that there is perfect harmony between it and the part above waist, and thus the bronze is one of the finest examples

for good proportions. On account of the fact that the figure stands in *tri-bhaṅga* posture with the slant to the right, the right leg is bent slightly while the left leg is planted firmly on the pedestal. This has caused the line of the right side dropping vertically down from the stomach. This verticality of the line is however relieved beautifully when it reaches the knee where it takes an inward turn. On the left side, because of the stress on the left leg, the hip has become stressed. By modelling this part with smooth-curving line, its beauty has been enhanced. The fine curve at the hip has off-set even the effect of monotony of the vertical line that frames the left leg on its outside.

The drapery worn by this figure is very interesting. It is done in the wave-upon-wave manner which is met with in such bronzes as the Pārvatī of the Vṛishabhavāhana group from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 128) and the Pārvatī from Taṇḍantoṭṭam (Fig. 69). The recurrence of this particular *motif* here, as referred to by us above, shows that the *sthapati* of this group of bronzes was following earlier traditions. The two waist-bands are flat and are gracefully contracted in the centre. From the lower band hang beautiful festoons and tassels arranged on both the thighs in a most pleasing manner. The effect of this detail is enhanced ten-fold by the flowing end of the cloth falling on the left thigh. No bows and hanging ends of cloth are seen on either side.

The back side of this bronze shows the headgear which is done in a beautifully tapering form. Even in this bronze the *śiraś-cakra* is missing. The arrangement of the locks of hair is noteworthy. Their ends are twisted and there are two rows of them depicted one over the other. The pendant is prominent. The other noteworthy feature in this side is the absence on the hips of the festoons etc., noticed on the waist on the front side, a characteristic which is noticed also in the *devīs* of Peruntoṭṭam Vishṇu (Fig. 124). The manner in which the ends and the borders of the garment is delineated is superb. Except for the left arm being stiff and the right arm slightly disproportionate this bronze is one of the remarkable examples of the art of Rājarāja I's time. The *padmāsana* of this bronze is in the same style in which the *padmāsana* of the Tripurāntaka is. Here the *bhadrāsana* is also preserved and it is very simple and goes well with the conception of the whole figure.

It is therefore easy now to see the importance of these two bronzes. On grounds of style these may be dated to the closing years of Rājarāja I's reign.

The bronze representing Māheśvarī[1] belonging to Gautam Sarabhai of Ahmedabad may be said to be amongst the bronzes attributable to the end of the reign of Rājarāja I. From a comparison of this with the Māheśvarī in the Madras Museum (Fig. 116) already noticed, it will be found that both of them are almost identical. But the present one differs from the latter in the following details.

[1] *The art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 51, Fig. 312.

The hair is arranged like a lotus bud, the strands being shown in a schematic fashion. The lock of hair falling on either shoulder is studded with very prominent flowers. Besides the *yajñopavīta* here, there is a *channavīra* of beads. In the lower left hand a small bowl is seen whereas the same hand of the Madras Museum figure is in *āhūya-varada* pose. The garment is elaborately worked, the *simha-mukha motif* being especially prominent. There is a ribbon end shown across the loop seen in front of the bent left leg. The most significant difference is the absence of the *padmāsana* in this figure. In the workmanship of the *bhadrāsana* too there is a slight difference between the two bronzes. In other respects both of them agree and the style in which both are executed is conspicuously similar and this fact shows clearly that they belong to the same school.

The bronzes examined above are only a few amongst hundreds belonging to the time of Rājarāja I. Even these give us an idea about the progress of the art of bronzes during the two last decades of the 10th century and the first two decades of the 11th century A.D.

A majority of the bronzes being Śaivite, it is apparent that Śaivism was much encouraged then. But that Vaishṇavism did not lag behind is seen from the existence of a number of Vishṇu and Śrīnivāsa groups. Among the Śaivite themes Naṭeśa and Pārvatī take precedence. But new themes like Māheśvarī, which probably served as a prototype for a bewildering variety of Kāḷī of subsequent periods, began to be in vogue. Amongst the bronzes, there are quite a few representing the Śaivite saints such as Chaṇḍikeśvara and Jñānasambanda, met with for the first time during this period. This is quite in keeping with the inscriptional evidence[1] that Rājarāja I and his relatives made a number of such bronzes and presented them to the temple at Tanjore. This new development paved the way for the making of numerous bronzes of this category in the subsequent periods.

Among the Vaishṇavite themes, the usual Vishṇu and Śrīnivāsa groups alone predominate; and no new themes seem to have as yet come into vogue. Representations of even the more popular theme of Rāma group appear to have been few and far between or their existence is not known.

The bronzes belonging to this period are solid cast ones and of considerable sizes. These serve only as a measure for the advancement of technology and for the all round prosperity of the period. This was due to Rājarāja's conquests as well as to a variety of welfare schemes that he pushed through.

[1] *SII, op. cit.*

Another aspect of this art of this period is that its development is restricted to a single territory namely Tanjore District, which indicates that all significant developments in this field were more or less confined to the Choḷa-maṇḍalam. This shows that Rājarāja I not merely continued to encourage the art but arranged for its progress to an unprecedented level in the Choḷa-maṇḍalam.

SCHOOL OF RĀJENDRA I

Fig. 140 One of the earliest groups of bronzes of this school is the one representing Kalyāṇasundara from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi. From the stances of Śiva and Pārvatī and their exquisite workmanship, anyone will be tempted, at first glance, to consider it to belong to an earlier period. On the contrary the following details prove beyond doubt that this group does not belong to a period earlier than the second or third decade of the 11th century A.D. They are, the not very distinct *jaṭā-makuṭa*; the excessively extended braid of hair on the shoulders; the thin and delicate *yajñopavīta*; the ornate *keyūra*; and elaborate *siṁha-mukha* of Śiva; and a delicate *channavīra, nāga-valaya* type of *keyūra* and the elaborately worked tassels of the drapery, of Pārvatī. Besides, both have sharp and straight noses; their hands are comparatively short; the lines of their sides are excessively strained and luxuriant hair covers the back of the neck fully. In addition to these the *padmāsana* on which they stand is more or less in the early 11th century style. When so many details point to a later date the few pieces of evidence suggesting earlier fashions may have to be taken as survivals of ancient traditions. Such a phenomenon can be certainly expected in a bronze if it was a donation by royal personages, as they would get the images made by the most renowned *sthapati* of the territory. In this connection it is good to remember what has been said above (p. 223) while discussing the bronze representing Tripurāntaka (Fig. 138) from the Tanjore temple. Let us examine the group in detail.

The high *jaṭā-makuṭa* of Śiva has the flower on top and the ornament with prongs is delicately worked and it is easily known from the workmanship of the binding piece at the centre. The face is elongate and the eyes and eye-brows are shown by incised lines. The nose is sharp and straight but the lips are refined and beautiful. The ears are empty. The expression is not one of joy or smile as is to be expected in a theme representing wedlock. On the other hand, there is a suggestion of surprise, coupled with the attitude of divine benevolence.

There are on the neck two *kaṇṭhīs* of which the lower one has a gem-set thick central design. The *yajñopavīta* is thin and is two-stranded. There is a small bell-shaped clasp with a knot, hanging from it. The *udara-bandha* is simple. All these show grooved lines on them, which is one of the characteristics of the art of the period.

As regards the torso, it is moulded in a manner showing suppleness although the heavily strained lines seem to disturb the beauty of the modelling of this part. The hanging ornament on the right shoulder is nicely worked. There are also the strands of hair falling on either shoulder.

The arms are comparatively short and thick. But in their modelling and disposition, there is obviously a charm which evidently suggests that it is a product of a master *sthapati*. The fingers are short but they are nonetheless full of life. The ornaments are ornate especially the *nāga-valaya* type of *keyūra* which is not only in three bands and grooved but also shown in an inclined manner which is novel. The prancing deer which is not actually held by the first two fingers, is thick-set. The style of the *paraśu* in the opposite hand is very ornate and this is another indication for the fact that the image does not belong to an earlier period.

The part below the waist is well executed. The *bhaṅga* has required the bend on the left side and the leg is therefore slightly bent causing the right hip to project out. The posture of the legs has been rendered in a superb manner. Even the not too happily dealt with line of the right side assumes a graceful flow with a subtle but pleasing wave at the knee. The line of the left side is also equally dexterously delineated. These outer lines of the legs get their rhythm accentuated by the lines of their inner side, which is obviously the result of a consummate handling of them. The inherent plastic qualities of modelling are brought out to the fore by the scanty drapery patterned with the characteristic wheel designs. The *siṁha-mukha* clasp on the waist-band has become very ornate. But the end of cloth hanging from the sash has an exquisite frill work. On either side of this is seen a tassel which is very much like the pendant seen on the right shoulder. Though the bronzes of the last phase of the school of Rājarāja I have emphasised their knee-joints, here they are restrained and are in the classical style of the school of Parāntaka I. *Pādasaras* are present. Ends of cloth with bow decoration are not shown on the sides.

Coming to the back, the *śiraś-cakra* is of the early blossomed flower type. But the grooves of each of the petals do not suggest an earlier date. The braided locks with pointed tips are close to each other and interestingly they seem to suggest luxuriant hair. Just as in the Tripurāntaka from the Tanjore temple, here also the pendant is absent suggesting thereby that the *sthapatis* were faithfully following the traditions handed down by their ancestors, although in some other respects they began to create their own traditions. The tucked-up end of cloth which is shown fan-wise on the back is worked elegantly. But the modelling of the buttocks does not seem to be quite upto the mark; or more truly, this was the way they came to be modelled during this period as it is also seen in the *devī*, and thus it may be said to be one of the elements of the art traditions established in this period. The other details of this side are as usual fine. Fig. 141

Turning to the *devī* figure, it is but natural that it displays all the qualities of the figure of Śiva. It must be said, however, that here there is an additional quality namely the feminine grace. It has been brought out effortlessly by the *sthapati* by the masterly rendering of the *bhaṅga* (flexion) of the figure, the rhythm of which is surpassingly beautiful. A short but pleasing *jaṭā-makuṭa* on the head, two simple *kaṇṭhīs* with a *māṅgalya-sātra* preceding them on the neck, a beaded fine *channavīra* with a penāant hanging from its joint shown between the bosoms on the body, *nāga-valaya* of the type seen in Śiva and a series of slender bangles bound by cross-bands adorn the figure. This series of bangles seems to be characteristic of figures of women engaged in wedlock because the Pārvatī of the Kalyāṇasundara group (Fig. 126) from Tiruveṇkāḍu has also bangles of this type and they are not usually met with in women figures not seen in such a context.

The modelling of the torso and the arms is obviously simple and smooth. The suppleness is effectively shown by the right arm. The modelling of the bosoms is good although it could have been better. The part below the naval has also been rendered beautifully.

The *sāri* is depicted in a realistic manner and its folds are suggested not by widely separating wave patterns but by flowing lines shown close to each other. There are the tassels and festoons hanging from the girdle. But the interesting detail here is the end of cloth with an exquisitely frilled tip hanging on the right thigh. No bows and hanging ends of cloth are seen on either side. The posture of the slender legs taken together with that of the lifted up left arm and the other arm extended across to be held by Śiva is appropriate in the context although it cannot compare favourably with the posture of Pārvatī from Tiruveṇkāḍu, engaged in a similar context.

The back view of the *devī* has details similar to those of Śiva. The special points to be noted here are the circular clasp which binds the four bands of the *channavīra* from which hangs down a pendant, the elaborately worked end of cloth tucked up at the waist and the absence of the festoons etc., on this side. The *bhaṅga* as seen in front which has given the figure all its charm has been to some extent responsible for the excessive stress on the lines of the sides as seen in this view.

Both the figures stand on a common *padmāsana* of elongated oval shape. It is in two pieces. Its petals are obviously in a style which tends to become conventional. The *bhadrāsana* is of very simple workmanship. It seems to have been a later or recent addition, the original having been either broken or lost.

The importance of this group of bronzes would now be clear. Unfortunately there is no way of ascertaining even approximately its date, because as far as we are aware,

no example of stone sculpture of this or similar themes in comparable style has been noticed. With the result there is no other way but to relay on style alone, according to which this group may be seen to take a place after the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 138) from Tanjore. This group may therefore be assigned to about the end of the second decade of the 11th century.

The Tripurāntaka belonging to the Mayūranāthasvāmi temple, Māyūram, Tanjore District, may be found to be similar in several respects to the Śiva of the above group except for the slenderness of modelling. Like the latter, this also has an ancient 'look' but the stages of development at which the various details such as the *keyūra* and drapery are seen here, make it another excellent specimen of the art of the early phase of the school of Rājendra I. Fig. 142

Here we find a naturalistic *jaṭā-makuṭa* with the pronged ornament decorating it and the *Dātura* and other details prominent. The *paṭṭa* is also well worked. The ears are empty. The face is not elongate but square with the nose and lips worked highly realistically. The expression is one of supreme self-absorption. The neck is normal and there are two thick gem-set *kaṇṭhīs*. The *yajñopavīta* is rather short and its wave is not quite beautiful. It has a short strand also but it is very slender and insignificant. The *udara-bandha* is a simple band. Even in this image the shoulder ornament is seen on the right side only. It is obviously in three strands and their swing is especially noteworthy. The torso is comparatively slender and its modelling though handled in a competent way does not seem to be quite good. Perhaps a slightly plumpier moulding would have greatly enhanced the beauty of this bronze. The chest is broad and the shoulders are drooping. There are on them the flower-decked braids of hair. The arms are somewhat short which is a characteristic of bronzes produced for some time now, and in their disposition slight improvement seems necessary. This defect is easily seen in the somewhat unnatural curving of the line of the left arm-pit which makes the arms of this side hang in the air as though removed from the body of the figure. This defect is seen to a slight degree on the right side also. The modelling of the arms is slender including the joined upper arms, which cannot be expected in a perfectly classical image and which shows the gradual lowering of standards. The *keyūras* are grooved and ornate like those of the above mentioned bronze. There is the elbow ornament in this bronze but it is quite subdued. Only a single bangle adorns each wrist. The deer and the *paraśu* are held between the first two fingers of the upper hands. The workmanship of the *paraśu* may be seen to be similar to that of the *paraśu* of Kalyāṇasundara discussed above. The poses of the remaining two hands are shown as if intended to hold the *vīṇā*. The workmanship of the fingers and their poses are as usual excellent.

Unlike those the previous figure, the hips of this figure are obviously less pronounced and consequently the lines of the sides have suffered to some extent. Nevertheless owing to the splendid modelling of the legs these lines have regained their purity, beauty and natural flow, from below the waist. As is usual in such representations, there is only a loin-cloth with flower patterns worked on it. The interesting thing about this garment is its raised margin which has come to characterise the bronzes for some decades now. There is an ornate waist-band with still more elaborately worked *simha-mukha* clasp. It shows not merely the horn-like appendages spreading out from it on either side but also display the bow-like decoration issuing out of its mouth, worked similarly thread-like. The *kaccha* which hangs in the middle has frills which are more developed than those of the Kalyāṇasundara. The ends of the *uttarīya* seen on the thighs on either side of the *kachha* are also obviously evolved. As in similar figures, here also no bows and flowing ends of cloth are seen on the sides. A beautiful *pādasara* is seen on each foot, but no anklet is present.

Fig. 143 At the back side the decoration of the *makuṭa* is not much and the *śiraś-cakra* is missing. The depiction of the braided locks of hair is interesting. They are simpler than in the previous bronze. But that the style in which this detail has been done is characteristic of the school is known from their large number, the manner of showing them close to each other and the absence of the pendant. From this side, the nature of the modelling and the true character of the lines which delimit the masses are known which is not quite pleasant. The poor rendering of the hip etc., is significant in this regard. The legs, however, retain features which are classical in quality.

The figure stands in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose on a *padmāsana* the workmanship of which is good. The petals of this *padma* are more naturalistic than those of the *āsana* of the Kalyāṇasundaramūrti dealt with above.

Except for a few defects mentioned above the bronze is on the whole a good specimen of the art of the school and on the basis of its affinities to the Kalyāṇasundara, it may also be dated to the beginning of the third decade of the 11th century.

Fig. 144 The Tripurāntaka from Veḷḷaṇūr of the former Pudukkottai State now in the Tiruchirapalli District, may be attributed to the early phase of the school of Rājendra I. Apparently this bronze is not in the style in which the Tripurāntakas from Tanjore and Māyūram (Figs. 138 and 142) are done. The latter bronzes being products of the traditions as obtained in the heart of the Choḷa territory, they follow certain line in modelling and decoration. It has been shown above, that during this period when the Choḷas were supreme all over the South, besides the school in the Choḷa-maṇḍalam proper, several local schools of art and architecture were in existence and that they contributed

certain new elements to the traditions of the art of bronzes too. Since the bronzes from the Koṅgu, the Veḷir and the Pāṇḍya countries exemplify these local contributions they may be said to be examples of the local schools which are but branches of the central schools designated after the names of one or the other of the kings. This Tripurāntaka is an example of this category. The very modelling of the limbs and the torso is illustrative of this hypothesis. For, though arms and the legs appear to be classical in finish, they are obviously disproportionate and suffer from the defect of being constricted in more than one place. This has affected the smooth flow of the lines which is the *sine qua non* for the excellence of form. In spite of this, the posture of the figure and the expressive features of the face contribute largely to the majesty of the figure. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* which is cylindrical in shape is worked in a naturalistic manner and the emblems on it are not prominent. As has been seen in some of the Śiva figures, here also the *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the right ear. The single *kaṇṭhī* is of a peculiar type and there is also a ring round it. The shoulder ornament seen on the right side only, is also interesting for its shape as well as for its rather inartistic sway. Another significant detail seen in this figure is the hood of a serpent projecting out from behind the left shoulder which is apparently intended more as an ornament than as a symbol of terror, although the very idea of introducing this in this theme has the latter significance also. The *yajñopavīta* is in three strands but the central strand is swaying in an inartistic manner. The manner in which the two lower strands are worked is also considerably different from that in which those of the other Tripurāntaka figures is depicted. Nevertheless the presence of the serpent on the body of the *gaṇa* under the left foot makes the identification certain. The *gaṇa* is very small and he is blowing a conch. The right foot is placed on a small lotus pedestal while the whole figure stands on a beautifully designed large circular *padmāsana*. The shorts together with the highly developed *siṁha-mukha* clasp is also noteworthy on this side. The slenderness of the figure and the irregularities in its modelling are quite clearly seen in the back view. The most interesting detail on this side is the knot of the ribbon on the *makuṭa*. Similar ribbons are found in the Kirātamūrti (Fig. 156) from Rādhānarasiṁhapuram and in the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Semaṅgalam (Fig. 161) to be discussed below. The full view of the serpent on the left shoulder and the pendent ornament hanging from the neck on the back are also noteworthy. Though the figure as a whole suffers from certain deficiencies, the details are worked with care and attention. So, in spite of its defects, this piece is a good example of the art of the local school which flourished in the Pudukkottai region during the first quarter of the 11th century A.D. Fig. 145

The Jaṭā-makuṭa Lokeśvara[1] from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam may be dealt with next on account of the similarity of its style to that of the above mentioned bronzes. Its height Fig. 146

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *The Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, p. 48, Pl. VII, Fig. 1.

with pedestal is 14·4 *cm*. The high *jaṭā-makuṭa* is "pyramidal in design" and has four tiers. The topmost part however clearly indicates the *jaṭās* and there is also the flower on top of all. The face is elongate a little. Its details have been rubbed off to some extent. Yet the workmanship of the eyes, the nose and the lips is somewhat clear, which is apparently akin to that of the above discussed bronzes. There are *makara-kuṇḍalas* of indistinct form in the ears. A broad gem-set *kaṇṭhī* adorns the neck. The *yajñopavīta* is two-stranded and its wavy form is slightly stiff. The navel is prominently shown. The torso is beautiful as the lines of the sides retain their original purity. The chest is narrow. The shoulders are strong and show heavy braided locks on them. The shoulder ornament is simple but its curve to right is noteworthy. The four arms are well proportioned as well as disposed. Simple *keyūras* and a pair of *valayas* are the ornaments seen on the arms and wrists. The upper right hand holds a rosary of beads and the corresponding left hand a *kuṇḍikā* (vase). The lower right hand is in *varada* and the left hand holds a flower. The part below the waist which seems to be moulded somewhat short is not really so and the illusion is created by the long headdress. The loin-cloth is simple but the girdle is worked with gems. Besides, the end of the *uttarīya* that hangs from it, has a peculiar form. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran describes it as "sword-like." The noteworthy point is that it is thin, long and curved and is attached to the left thigh. In a few later bronzes which will be examined presently this detail gets further modified or atrophied. The legs are rather heavy although the joints are not prominently shown. The flexions of the legs are, however, beautiful.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands has, as usual, the two rows of petals. But in their style some novelty is evident. Their rims are a bit thick and raised, and there is a lot of space between two petals to allow a big interleaf. The tips of the petals do not seem to be prominent. It may be said that the form of this *āsana* may have been taken as the basis for *padmāsana* of a number of later bronzes of Tamil-nāḍ as well as of Ceylon.

It would have been seen that in spite of the bronze being small its maker had bestowed great attention and had thus made it a good specimen of the school. So the similarity suggested between this and the early Choḷa sculptures of Nāgeśvara temple, Kumbhakoṇam by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran requires modification. It may be dated to about the end of the first quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 147 The Chaṇḍikeśvara[1], height with base about 54 *cm* standing in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose may be considered next. It has a *jaṭā-makuṭa* with a gem-set *paṭṭa* round its middle part. Round its bottom a garland of flowers is depicted. The flowers are delicately and

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VI, p. 22, Pl. XI.

realistically worked. The face is chubby and its features are clearly and beautifully delineated. The style in which the eyes are shown is comparable to that of the eyes of Lokeśvara examined above although in the latter bronze, this detail is worn out a little. Not only the eyes but their pupils are also shown by incised lines. There is a deep naturalistic *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear and the right ear is empty. The expression is suggestive of wonder (*adbhuta*) and supreme joy (*ānanda*) caused by the manifestation of Śiva to bless the saint.

The necklaces, one of them consisting of a series of *kiṅkiṇīs* beautify the neck. There is also a *yajñopavīta* of *ratna*, which is shown hanging in a naturalistic fashion. An *udara-baṇdha* of *ratna* is also seen. The modelling of the torso is good. Only on the right shoulder is seen a simple ornament. But on either shoulder is seen a braided hair. The shoulders are executed in a powerful manner. The axe which is his characteristic emblem is absent from this figure as in the figure from Velāṅkaṇṇi.

The arms are somewhat thick and short. But their lines are beautiful. Especially the angularities at the elbows are smoothened with the result it has a pleasant effect. The *keyūras* are interesting in that they are shown as tied by means of a piece of cloth, and the knots and the loops are seen on the outside of the arms. A pair of hard, grooved *valayas* is seen on the wrists. The hands are in *añjali* pose as seen in the Chaṇḍikeś-vara examined above. But here we find the flower garland also, similar to the one met with in the earlier Chaṇḍikeśvara from Taṇḍantoṭṭam, a detail which, in bronzes representing this saint and belonging to subsequent periods, is seen almost regularly. The manner of holding it is tasteful, because in the absence of the garland, the posture would recall to our mind at once the posture of the hands of the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi. The fingers are executed in a manner suggesting sensitiveness.

The modelling of the hips of this bronze is comparable to that of the previous bronze. The legs are however worked in a superb fashion marked by high proportions, splendidly suggestive flexions and classically restrained outlining and adjustment of masses. Even the prominent knee-caps have been so dealt with as not to disturb the harmonious plastic qualities.

The loin-cloth is an interesting specimen of its kind. It shows carefully worked and beautifully patterned wheel and flower designs between parallel lines. The girdle, as in the previous bronze, is simple and there is no *siṅha-mkha* clasp. In its place are prominent discs which may stand for gems. Then there is the "sword-like" end of the cloth seen between the legs, which also shows designs of the type mentioned above. A *pādasara* is seen on each foot. There is no *padmāsana*; instead we find an elevated circle attached to a *bhadrāsana*. This latter *āsana* is of good proportions and simple style.

The back view of this figure is not available. In spite of this, there is little or no difficulty in assigning this bronze to about the beginning of the second quarter of the 11th century, in view of the fact that it possesses qualities that characterise sculptures of this period. So the 12th century date given to it by S. Gopalachari [1] requires to be changed.

Fig. 148 Now we shall examine the Kaḷyāṇasundara group. The three bronzes of Śiva, Pārvatī and Vishṇu are photographed in Negative No. 423 and the Lakshmī in Negative No. 422 of the photographic collection preserved in the Office of the Government Epigraphist for India, Ootacamund. According to the records of that office, these images were photographed in the Śiva temple at Konerirājapuram in the Tanjore District. Though the Lakshmī is separately photographed, there is no doubt that it belongs to the group comprising the other three figures, because the set consisting of the other three figures would be incomplete without this and there is stylistic affinity between this and the other three. Without the help of these photographs it would not have been possible to group them. Furthermore, the importance and value of this photographic record of these beautiful bronzes will be apparent when we point out that the images, at least the Lakshmī and Pārvatī, have since been removed from the temple and disposed off to private collectors separately. This splitting of the group has caused difficulties in their identification especially of Lakshmī and Pārvatī. These two bronzes have been written upon by scholars, identifying Pārvatī as Mātaṅgī [2] and Lakshmī, at first variously [3] and finally as Pārvatī.[4] Now that the group is brought together, there need not be any difficulty in speaking about them together. It may be mentioned here that this group affords another piece of evidence for the popularity of the theme during the periods when Rājarāja I and his son ruled.

Kalyāṇasundara Śiva is seen to be in a style more developed than that in which the bronzes of the same theme from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi (Fig. 140) and in a private collection (Fig. 134) discussed above. The stylistic affinity of this bronze with the latter seems to be somewhat greater than with the former. Except for the following differences met with here, these two may be said to be more or less of the same type. Here the treatment of the shoulders and the knees is apparently crude; the neck ornaments are stiff; and the lower left hand is in *varada* pose. The *bhaṅga* in which the figure stands is not very graceful. But the shoulder ornament on the right side and the beaded band serving as elbow ornament are noteworthy as being characteristics of the art of the period. The two emblems are broken and missing.

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VI, Pl. VII.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18; T. G. Aravamuthan in his *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, Fig. 9, identified it as Queen Sembiyan-mā-dēvi, wife of Gaṇḍar-Āditya-Chola.

[4] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 74, Pl. 55, Fig. 317.

About Pārvatī, ht. about 83 *cm* more particulars are available as it has been published already in the *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VI. Further this is apparently a good specimen although in the original photograph, owing to its not being cleaned, its real qualities are not seen to advantage. Fig. 149

The *keśa-bandha* of this bronze is ornate to some extent. It shows a ribbon decoration at its summit, on either side of which is a circular ornament worked like a flower. From the ribbon hangs a tassel both in front and back. Then there is the *keyūra* like ornament of exquisite workmanship all round the *keśa-bandha* but the one in front is not only very prominent but has tassels and festoons hanging from it. The fillet is another very prominently worked feature of this figure. In none of the figures of female deities have we seen the details so crisply worked.

The face is oval and everyone of its features is apparently lovely. Particularly noteworthy are the nose and the eyes. Interestingly these features are seen to be almost identical with those of Pārvatī of the Kalyāṇasundara group from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi (Fig. 140). Somehow, the lips have not been successfully dealt with. Or, in order to show effectively the seriousness of expression, the *sthapati* had done the lips like this, probably intentionally. It may be mentioned here that in a majority of representations of Pārvatī, the expression is a bit serious or self-absorbed. Probably it is so even in this representation due to the context of marriage. The ears are tender and beautiful but they are empty.

On the neck are seen two necklets, one a simple ring and another a broad and ornate *kaṇṭhī*. More refined than these is the *vaikaksha* of pearls that is seen as a cross-band on the body. The beautiful knot that binds this ornament is seen between the breasts, and from this knot hangs a tassel with a gentle wave near its tip. The absence of other decorative embellishments and the delicacy of treatment make the torso superb. But unlike in the case of the female figure examined above, great emphasis is laid on the hips of this figure with the result they have become wide (*pṛithu*). As a consequence the waist has become very much slender. The breasts are not so conspicuous as in some of the earlier examples; nevertheless their treatment is beautiful and it proves the skill of the *sthapati*. The shoulders are graceful, and a short tassel from each branch of the *vaikaksha* hangs near about each shoulder. The other decorative detail seen on either shoulder is the curly strand of hair with flowers on it. The manner in which the arms are joined to the shoulders is not good. The treatment of the arms is however refined. In spite of that, the angularities characteristic of bronzes of this period are noticed at the elbows as well as at the knees. The armlets are interesting, because they are simple and beautiful in spite of the festoons with which they are embellished. The elegant knot seen on the outer side of the arm is noteworthy.

The elbowornament is subdued and it does not show any projection on the outer side. But a head-like piece is seen on the inside. Instead of a long file of bangles seen in some of the female figures, a set of four bangles is seen on each wrist. There are rings in the fingers. Arms are comparatively short. The right arm, though hanging down, is slightly bent and the hand is in the posture of holding. The left arm is fully bent and kept high above, as in the case of the Pārvatī of the Tiruveḷvikkuḍi Kalyāṇasundara (Fig. 140). The fingers are indeed delicately worked.

The part below the waist is modelled beautifully. But, as has been said above, the hip portion and the thighs have been stressed so much that the portion from knee downwards has necessarily suffered to some extent, because of its comparatively more attenuated modelling. This special feature of the bronze is probably based on texts pertaining to definitions of various types of men and women.

The garment shows pairs of lines running parallel to each other with the space in between two of them being filled up with wheel or flower designs which are similar in workmanship to those seen on the garments of the Hālāhala figure (Fig. 102) from Kadri, the Hanumān (Fig. 98) and Lakshmaṇa (Fig. 96) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr and the Somāskanda from Sorakkuḍi (Fig. 86). Here the treatment of the design is more evolved than in the other figures. One end of the garment is tucked in at the left side of the waist and a short length of it hangs on the left thigh. The frilling of its tip is exquisitely worked. The other end of the garment hangs between the legs but is attached to the left leg. The mastery of the *sthapati* is revealed by the symmetrical arrangement of the waves of its tip. Two girdles are present of which one is beaded. It is from the beaded girdle that the tassels and festoons hang on the thighs. The clasp of the upper girdle is very simple. The sash is seen wound twice round the waist. Both the courses show a broad median loop, that of the lower band being more prominent than that of the upper one. This is an interesting feature, because in none of the Pārvatī figures examined above the median loop has been seen.

Fig. 150 At the back are a few more interesting details. Besides the minute workmanship of the *keśa-bandha*, the treatment of the *śiraś-cakra* is noteworthy. It is obviously a petalled one but the tips of the petals are bound here by a broad rim. The central knob is simple and from it hangs a flat tassel. Below the *śiraś-cakra* is arranged, in a charming manner, a closely arranged series of strands of hair with their ends showing curls more or less in a conventionalised form. There is the usual pendant seen below the rows of hair. Here the heart-like part of the pendant is broad. The *vaikaksha* is also interesting because on this side also, a tassel is seen pendent from the knot. The girdles and bands of sashes are simple in this side. But instead of going round the waist, the second course of the sash has stopped at half-way on either side and its ends are seen, one on each side,

hanging from the upper course on the thighs. The tips of this band are also worked in the usual wave pattern. Another interesting detail noticed on this side is the absence of the festoons and tassels while they are very delicately and prominently carved in front. This is another instance of the practice as obtained during this period. Their absence at the back of the figure in question and in other figures is probably due to reasons of economy. The tucked-up end, in the form of a fan, of the garment seen in the middle of the waist is noteworthy.

Coming to the style of the torso, the narrowness of it is very clearly seen from this side, and the rounded form of the hips and buttocks is conspicuous. Though the thighs are emphasised, as has been mentioned above, the lines that bind them are apparently distorted to a great extent which has resulted in the somewhat ugly attenuation of the portion about the knee, a logical development of the same feature met with in the bronzes mentioned above. Notwithstanding this, the legs are still beautiful and their postures rhythmic. On the feet are *pādasaras* and rings are seen in the toes.

The figure stands in the beautiful *dvi-bhaṅga* posture, on lotus pedestal. The petals of this pedestal are in a form quite different from those of pedestals examined so far and have become rather conventionalised.

In Vishṇu, the *kirīṭa*, the *kuṇḍikā* held by the two lower hands and the garment are noteworthy as they are apparently more developed than the respective items of Vishṇu figuring in the Kalyāṇasundara group (Fig. 126) from Tiruveṇkāḍu. These developments are obviously due to the difference in date between them. The garment with the close folds is of particular interest as it is very much akin to that of Śiva of the Somāskanda group (Fig. 133) from Tiruveṇkāḍu. Of the emblems, the conch is not present, and the discus shows conventionalised flames on its rim. The other details are characteristic of the bronzes discussed above; and it must be said that they show signs of becoming stiff. The *padmāsana*, which is similar to those of the above mentioned two figures of the group, is an instance in point.

The last bronze of this group is the Lakshmī. As has been said above it has not been properly identified by the earlier writers.[1] Now that its original place has been fixed, we may examine it carefully in its proper context. Fig. 151

Coming to its details, the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is broader at the base. The face is roundish and chubby and the eyes are almond-like. The *kaṇṭhīs* are broad. To the outermost

[1] In the *Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 74), this is not only identified as Pārvatī, but its provenance is given as Tanjore with an interesting note namely, "An identical figure has been photographed in the Konerirājapuram temple, Tanjore District (see T. G. Aravamuthan below)." In fact, both are one and the same, with this difference that the reproduction (Fig. 9) in Aravamuthan's book is from a photograph of the image before it was cleaned.

of the *kaṇṭhīs* are attached the straps of the *kuca-bandha*. There is also the *channavīra* with the tassel hanging in between the breasts. The modelling of the torso and the bosom is exquisite. The shoulder ornament is not only thin and long but shows rather a sweeping curve. The *keyūras* are of the pronged type showing festoons hanging from their lower parts. Elbow ornament is present but it does not show any projection. The hands and fingers are executed beautifully. The posture in which they are held is lovely.

The part below the waist is also beautifully moulded, except for the emphasis at the knee. The garment is plain and diaphanous and it clings to the body. It is seen hanging only upto the knee in the left leg. One end of it hangs on the right thigh while the other hangs between the legs and both are done in a naturalistic manner. The sashes are simple. From the lowermost of them, which has a very shallow loop, hangs a series of broad festoons demarcated by tassels. As is seen in the Lakshmī (Fig. 126) of the Kalyāṇasundara group from Tiruveṇkāḍu here also the figure leans forward a little which is appropriate to the occasion of leading Pārvatī to the presence of Śiva. *Pādasaras* alone are present. The figure stands on a *padmāsana* of which the petals are shown by means of lines although the tips of the petals have been emphasised a good deal, a feature which characterises the *padmāsanas* of later-day bronzes. Even here, if the *āsana* is the original one, then its style would make one believe that the bronze does not belong to the period to which we assign it. But considering the fact that from the time of the last phase of the school of Rājarāja I, the workmanship of this detail has not been uniform, it is necessary to be careful not to be carried away by the style of the pedestal alone, in deciding the dates of the bronzes. These bronzes, therefore, besides themselves being interesting ones, have been made to experience certain vicissitudes which have made them acquire a special significance. In view of the similarity of their style to that of the above discussed bronzes, they may be assigned to the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 152 The other standing Buddha,[1] ht. 73.5 *cm* from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam may be said to belong to the same period as that of the above. It has been described by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran in his book on p. 39.

It is to be noted that the description does not rightly indicate anything regarding the affinity of this bronze to the other standing Buddha (Fig. 58) discussed above, although both are assigned to the same century and both are taken together wherever their style is compared with the styles of other bronzes elsewhere in the book. The difference between them is apparent.

The flame on the head of this Buddha is obviously more developed than that of the Buddhas discussed above. It is no longer three-tongued and has two more tongues.

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, Pl. V, Fig. 2.

The central tongue is higher than the two next ones and the two outermost ones are much shorter than them. The tongues of flame of the other Buddhas are of the same height. The curls of hair here are not so naturalistic as those of the previous Buddhas. The face is ovoid and its forehead portion is narrower than that of the other Buddha. This feature coupled with the rather acute curve of the eye-brows, almond-like eyes, the straight nose and chubby cheeks makes the face quite different in feeling from that of the other Buddha. This is without doubt due to the difference in time between them.

The shoulders are not as beautiful as those of the other Buddha; nor the modelling of the torso of this is as good. The chest has become narrow here, and the stomach portion not so beautiful. The arms have become slightly thicker and the treatment of the fingers is not so elegant as that of the fingers of the other Buddha. The workmanship of the garment is likewise more developed and less attractive than the other Buddha. Coming to the portion below waist, the modelling of the hips of this bronze is markedly different from that of the previous Buddha. While in that Buddha, the line of the right side smoothly glides down the right leg, here it seems to struggle hard at the point of the hip before it reaches down. Owing to this, certain amount of ugliness seems to have resulted. The knee-caps of this bronze are prominently seen, which as we have seen is a characteristic of the bronzes of the period under study.

Coming to the pedestal, it is very interesting that there are figures of lions in the indentation. The presence of the lions on the pedestal indicates that it is intended to be a *simhāsana* as suggested by Mr. Ramachandran. We may, however, say that this detail may also be taken to indicate the fact that the Buddha was Śākyusiṁha. Such *āsanas* are rarely met with in bronzes in general. Even in the case of the bronzes of the Buddha and Jina, where sometimes *siṁhāsanas* are to be shown necessarily, the loins are not shown as in this bronze but are shown as prancing and supporting the back of the *āsanas*. [Cf. seated Buddha from Nāgappaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 179) and seated Jaina Tīrthaṅkara from Śivagaṅga (Fig. 259) to be discussed below].

Of the four rings on each side, the two large ones shown one over the other with holes facing up are probably intended to receive a *prabhā* which is missing.

The *padmāsana* of this figure is also interesting. It has been rightly described as a "real lotus in blossom." But apparently there is a vast difference between this lotus and the lotus of the other Buddha. The petals have become very broad; a slight attempt at demarcating the rims of each by bending them sharply is seen. There is also the clear attempt to fuse the lower sides of two successive petals with the result that

only the tips of the narrow long intermediate petals are seen here, whereas in the case of the previous bronze two successive large petals are clearly divided by an intermediate petal. Further, the tips of the petals have become very much pronounced and their curves are sharper. This is what has been met with in the case of the bronzes discussed above. Thus the style of the figure which is the sum total of the treatment of individual details is akin to that of the bronzes of the school of Rājendra I. In spite of the fact that such bronzes as the Buddhas are bereft of several details that are usually found in bronzes representing the various aspects of Śiva or Vishṇu, the treatment of the few details of them as well as their modelling are alone sufficient to indicate approximately their chronological position. Hence this bronze may also be assigned to the end of the second quarter of the 11th century.

Fig. 153 The Śrīnivāsa from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi has features which make it belong to this school. The Vishṇu last examined is from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) belonging to the last phase of the school of Rājarāja. Between that and this a good deal of difference in the treatment of details exists. Firstly this figure is thick-set and in this respect it may be said to be a prototype of the Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr to be examined below. But the other details such as the *kirīṭa*, the *kaṇṭhīs*, the *yajñopavīta*, *śaṅkha* and *cakra* are further developed than those of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. The development of the details is significantly seen in the treatment of the draperies or the *pītāmbara* of the Lord and the median loop of the sash. Moreover, the workmanship of the chain-like thing that hangs between the legs is also at a developed stage. The *āsanas* are beautiful, in proportion and design. In spite of these developed details the majesty of the figure is unmistakable. This may be assigned to about the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 154 The group representing Śrīnivāsa, ht. 81·*cm*, with consorts each 64 *cm* high from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr,[1] may be taken for examination next.

The Śrīnivāsa figure is as usual the tallest in the group and it stands in the *samabhaṅga* posture. The *kirīṭa* on the head is much more ornate than that of the Vishṇu from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 126) and Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123) discussed above. The knob on top is however not so prominent as the knob of the *kirīṭa* of Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr and the Vishṇus mentioned above. The petal design is clearly seen below the knob. The pronged ornament is dealt with in great restraint. The fillet though small, is decorated with festoons and tassels. These are seen all over the *kirīṭa*.

The face is square and its features are similar to those of Vishṇu of the Kalyāṇasundara group from Tiruveṇkāḍu. The eye-brows as well as the eye-lids are shown by thick lines. The nose is sharp. The lips are beautiful and a gentle smile beams through

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. III, Fig. 2.

them. The ears are slightly swaying and are decorated with *makara-kuṇḍalas* as well as flowers. The flowers on top of the ears are very prominent here. The expression is indicative of supreme joy (*paramānanda*) which only the Lord can have.

The neck is normal and there are the lines probably standing for the *trivalī*, a chief characteristic of great men (*mahā-purushas*) which is natural to Purushottama or the Greatest Man. Three necklets are seen of which the middle one is broad and shows *kiṅkiṇīs* whereas the other two are thin. *Yajñopavīta* is three-stranded but all of them are comparatively thinner. The two subsidiary strands are very thin of which the long lower one is visible only slightly. The middle one is however long and is wavy to some extent. The knot on the left chest is thick but the looped end is not prominent. The long lower strand of the *yajñopavīta* goes beneath the garment and is seen only above the ankle afterwards. The *udara-bandha* is simple and broad, but it does not show any tassels or festoons which are seen in the Vishṇu from Tiruveṇkāḍu.

The style of the torso is obviously akin to that of the Vishṇu mentioned above. But here the lines on either side are not smooth-flowing which is easily seen from the elevation and depression occurring below the *udara-bandha*. It may be mentioned here that the strain exhibited by these lines of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam is much more than here. On the right chest is seen a small symbol standing for *Śrīvatsa*. The joining of the arms to the shoulders too is peculiar here. The shoulders are suggestive of power and strength and on each of them is a strand of hair decorated with more than one flower. Besides, the characteristic pendant is seen on the right shoulder alone. In some of the figures noticed above a duplication of this ornament on the other shoulder was seen. The absence of this decorative piece on the other shoulder may have to be taken as indicative of the continuance of earlier tradition in this respect only, while in other respects there is a marked development of details *e.g.*, the *kirīṭa*, necklets and *yajñopavīta*.

The arms are proportionate and moulded in a beautiful manner. Nevertheless the angular character of the elbows are apparent and it seems to have become from now on nearly standardised. The pronged *keyūras* with festoons hanging from below them adorn the arms. A set of three *valayas* is seen on each wrist. The thick elbow ornament is also noteworthy and similar ones have been noticed in some of the early figures but more pronounced ones are seen in some of the bronzes to be examined below. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the corresponding left hand is in *kaṭy-avalambita* poses. That the fingers are extremely beautiful and delicate is obvious. There is no representation of a lotus in the right hand although in some other figure *e.g.*, Vishṇu, No. 2, in the Madras Museum (Fig. 25), and Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 123), this is found. This is a significant omission and it is characteristic of images of Vishṇu made

during this period and subsequent periods. The upper hands hold respectively the discus and conch. They are slightly tilted, and are held by the first two fingers of the hands. The discus shows only three flames on its rim and no flame seems to be in evidence at its bottom by which it is held by the fingers. The conch too shows only three flames, but interestingly here a fourth flame is suggested at its bottom point projecting up from the fingers. Another interesting thing about the flames is that those on the sides show only three tongues while the number of tongues of the flames at the top, though not clear, are probably five. In this respect this figure is akin to the Vishṇu from Tiruveṇkāḍu. The disposition of the arms has become stylised in spite of the fact that individually the arms are perfect in workmanship.

The same remarks about the arms, are applicable to the legs also. Unlike the Vishṇu from Tiruveṇkāḍu, here the legs are proportionate to the entire figure. The garment is almost plain except for the suggestion of the folds by thick lines shown comparatively at wider intervals. A broad girdle and a beaded girdle are seen on the waist with a *siṁha-mukha* clasp of an ornate type in its front. The bow-like pieces issuing out from either side of this lion-face are characteristically wide. The *uttarīya* or sash is seen wound thrice round the waist and the middle band has a shallow median loop which passes through the bow-like pieces referred just above. The lower band of the *uttarīya* is comparatively thin and its loop in front is obviously graceful. There are monoliform festoons and beaded tassels hanging from the waist-bands but it may be noted that these are not emphasised so much as they are in the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam. The *kaccha* seen between the legs is naturalistic. Further, a long chain with heart-like pendant at its tip is seen hanging from the *siṁha-mukha* as in the other Vishṇus, a beginning of which was noticed in the Śrīnivāsa from Vaḍakāḍu. It may be mentioned here that this feature seems to get greater attention from the *sthapatis* of the subsequent period as exemplified by such figures as the Chandraśekhara now in Musee Guimet,[1] Paris. The bows and hanging ends of cloth seen on either side of the figure, though more evolved than the same detail met with in the Śrīnivāsa from Sirupaṇaiyūr are still naturalistic. The hanging ends are in duplicate here, the second end being shown hanging only to half the length of the other end. Their tips are simple and beautiful.

Fig. 155 At the back, the *śiraś-cakra* is represented like a wheel. Further, the treatment of the hair is charming and the curly strands hang on the back in a naturalistic fashion, and here also the ringlets of hair are bound by a thick ring which is the continuation of one of the necklets. The *yajñopavīta* does not show clearly the knot where the long strand unites with the rest.

[1] *Catalogue*, Pl. XII, Fig. 1.

One of the interesting details is the pedestal on which the figure stands. Both the *padmāsana* and *bhadrāsana* are moulded together. The *padmāsana* has petals which are characteristic of the period. No marginal lines are present in the petals, nor are their tips emphasised. The *bhadrāsana* has beautiful mouldings, a ring on either side to facilitate the handling of the figure, two metal eyes on each side for securing the figure while it is taken out in procession and a pair of spikes for a *prabhā*. A very interesting detail met with in this pedestal is the three figures of lion shown one in each of the three compartments of the depression in front. On the other three sides no such representation is seen. The figures of lions are obviously spirited. The lion in the middle compartment is seated facing the spectator, while those on either side are shown in profile, the one to the right of the figure facing proper right and that to the left of the figure facing proper left. This is a novel feature not met with in any other Vishṇu or Śrīnivāsa of this period or of subsequent periods. Rampant lion figures are seen in the Vishṇu from Vaḍakāḍu, where they are intended as supports for the spikes. In the smaller standing Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 152), figures of lion in the same manner are seen. It will be clear that except for the erect posture of the figure which makes it slightly stiff, its other details are interesting and moreover one or two of them are novel.

Now to the *devī* figures. Like the *devīs* of the Peruntoṭṭam group (Fig. 123) here also these figures lean towards Śrīnivāsa, their bent arms are also towards him. This has been the characteristic feature of almost all the Vishṇu or Śrīnivāsa groups produced since then. The deviation met with in the Sirupaṇaiyūr group, is probably due to the fact that it is one of the earliest sets with consorts, where a certain amount of freedom seems to have been allowed to the *sthapati* in the depiction of the postures of the *devīs*.

Śrīdevī has a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* which is cylindrical but for the two distinctive *karaṇḍas* at its top. This *makuṭa* is decorated with the usual *keyūra*-like ornament although it is not very clear. The noteworthy detail of the headgear is the deeply projecting fillet. The face is beautiful and the features are sharp but the expression is suggestive of mild seriousness. Prominent *patra-kuṇḍalas* of an ornate type are seen in the ears. As in the Śrīnivāsa, there are flowers on the top of the ears. The neck is short. There are three necklets, which are highly ornate. The *channavīra* is thick and shows a tassel hanging down from the middle of the breasts. The *kuca-bandha* is prominent. But it does not show any bands going over the shoulders, a detail met with in the Śrīdevī of the Sirupaṇaiyūr group, and in the Lakshmīs of the Kalyāṇasuṇdara groups from Tiruveṇkāḍu and Konerirājapuram. The treatment of the torso of this figure shows some amount of stiffness which is especially noticeable in the

lines of the sides. The shoulders are moulded to suggest vigour rather than grace or tenderness and a strand of hair is depicted on each of them. The arms are proportionate and beautifully tapering, but the stiffness seen in the lines of the sides seems to characterise the lines of the arms too, and the arm in *lola* pose exemplifies this remarkably and owing to this the rhythm is lacking in it. The left arm is bent and held up and its hand is in the *kaṭaka* pose. The fingers of the hands are as usual beautiful. The *keyūras* of the pronged type are seen in arms. Besides, there are the elbow ornaments which however do not show the projecting piece. Instead, in the place where this piece used to be present, there is a long thick knot. There are the *valayas* in the wrists.

Coming to the part below the waist, it is seen that the hips are not represented prominently. Consequently the lines of the sides seem to drop down rather suddenly which has removed to some extent the beauty of this figure. The legs, though proportionate, are to some extent stiff like the arms. But the left leg, which is bent slightly, is charming. The garment is thick. Interestingly enough, it is decorated with beautiful wheel and geometric designs. The *kaccha* that hangs between the legs is simple and does not show any frilling or sway met with in the same detail of the other female figures noticed above. A pair of broad tassels are seen on either thighs. In this figure are seen the bows and hanging ends of cloth on either side. As in the Śrīnivāsa, here, too, two ends are hanging, the shorter one being only half of the longer one. The girdle is broad and has a gem-set clasp from which hangs a bow-like knot, depicted as gracefully moving on either side. The waist-bands are two in number of which the lower one has a very shallow median loop.

The back view of the figure shows the *śiraś-cakra* worked in the same style as that of the *śiraś-cakra* of Śrīnivāsa. The interesting detail seen on this side is the braided locks that hang on the back. The ringlets of hair are worked in a beautiful manner; the ring that encircles them is of a gem-set type not of the simpler ring-type of which a best example is seen in the figures of the Vishṇu group from Peruntoṭṭam (Fig. 124). The cross-band seen in front is continued as a cross-band here also. But the bands are broad and simple. The knot at the crossing point is also simple. The other noteworthy details are the pendant hanging from the curly hair with a prominent heart-like piece at its tip and the tucked-up end of cloth seen in the middle of the waist. Beautiful *pādasaras* are seen on the feet.

The *āsana* on which the figure stands in the graceful *tri-bhaṅga* posture, shows the usual mouldings in the *bhadrāsana* and petals in its *padmāsana*. But the interesting thing about the petals is that they show prominently the incised marginal lines.

The *Bhūdevī* is similar to the above figure, but with the following differences in details :—

The *karaṇḍas* at the top of the *makuṭa*, are more prominent here. The fillet is somewhat subdued. *Makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears. As usual, *yajñopavīta* is seen in this figure instead of the *channavīra* seen in the Śrīdevī. It is comparatively thick. The shoulders show each a strand of hair. The treatment of the waist-bands shows the median loop more pronounced than that in the Śrīdevī.

A description of this group of bronzes is given in the *Catalogue* on page 70. And this group along with the Vishṇu group from Peruntoṭṭam has been referred to, by the learned authors of the *Catalogue*, in their introductory discussion, in more than one place, and it is rightly given a place second to that of the Vishṇu from Peruntoṭṭam by them. On stylistic grounds, this group may also be said to belong to about the end of the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

The bronze representing Śiva[1] as Kirātamūrti Rādhānarasiṁhapuram, Tanjore District may be examined now. This figure like its predecessors stands in the *ābhaṅga* pose on a *padmāsana*. Like a majority of the bronzes of this school, this is also thick-set but otherwise it has all the qualities of a classical piece. Besides, it has certain details which appear for the first time, suggesting thereby that they are the contributions of this school. Fig. 156

A high *jaṭā-makuṭa*. almost cylindrical in shape surmounted by the flower, here very much reduced in size, and therefore appearing as a knot, is seen here. But the style in which the *jaṭās* are arranged in front is interesting because instead of showing them in the usual criss-cross fashion, the *sthapati* has divided them vertically into two halves and the *jaṭās* on either side are shown flowing up, which is an innovation. The pronged ornament on the crown is, however, much evolved. The *paṭṭa* on the forehead is broad and is decorated with tassels etc. It is noteworthy that this *paṭṭa* which goes round the head is tied on the right side where the loops and hanging ends are seen. The face is square and beautifully moulded. The eyes are shown by lines, the nose is sharp and high. The lips are thick. The ears are short and they do not bear any ornaments. The expression suggests serenity. There are three necklets; but one of them hangs low like a *hāra*. As in the bronzes examined above, these necklets are also gem-set. The *yajñopavīta* is characteristically thin and its knot is somewhat ornate. It is interesting to note here the fact that no second strand is present in the *yajñopavīta*. The *udara-bandha* is flat and has lines incised on it. The torso is finished almost like a cylinder. This is due to the fact that the chest is narrow.

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 72.

The shoulder ornament is beautifully worked and is in three tassels, the central one having a pendant. The ornament is now worked on the shoulder itself. Besides this, a very much subdued flowing strand of hair (?) is seen on each shoulder. On the arms *nāga-valaya* type of *keyūra*, in three bands, with wide space between one another, is seen. Ornate elbow ornaments with projecting bits are present. A pair of *valayas* is seen on each wrist. The arms are thick but their modelling is proportionate, and the poses in which they are shown are tasteful. The gestures in which the hands are held are especially noteworthy and the workmanship of the fingers is naturalistic and they therefore seem to throb with life.

The hips have become comparatively atrophied. The legs are also thick-set and the difference in size between the thigh and the part below the knee is almost nil. Nevertheless the knee-caps are not shown prominently and the lines that frame the legs are without awkward contractions and bends. The stance of the left leg is pleasing but its effect is slightly marred by the thick-set feature of the leg. The loin-cloth is thin and close-fitting and bears floral patterns on it. Besides, its margins are emphasised by means of the narrow raised end. There are two girdles of which the upper one is carved and has the *simha-mukha* clasp. This clasp is however worked in a novel fashion, because it seems to be enclosed within an ellipse. There are also the thin lines that emanate from the head of the clasp and which go round the waist after taking a downward turn. This type of circling is seen again only in the specimens of the art belonging to later periods as we shall see below. The lower girdle is thick and has a gem-set clasp in front from which juts down a pointed bit in the place of the "sword-like" detail seen in several bronzes noticed above. *Pādasaras* are seen on the feet.

The back view of the bronze shows the cylindrical form of the headdress clearly. Besides, the arrangement of the hair is quite interesting. Instead of the braided locks woven into somewhat of a stale pattern, the hair is shown as *kuṭila-kuntalas* which are arranged in ten horizontal tiers. The *śiraś-cakra* was not probably there, because in the place of *śiraś-cakra* is seen a loop-like design probably of the *paṭṭa*. This kind of headdress has already been met with and it is also seen in some bronzes of later periods such as the Rājamannār (Fig. 174) and some Chaṇḍikeśvaras.

The locks of hair that fall on the back are also arranged in an interesting manner. All along, the braided locks of Śiva have been shown with only a single series of twisted ends, and there used to be not many braids. In the present case, there are two series of twisted ends arranged one over the other as in the case of Vishṇu images. Thus the novel design of the headdress seen on this side helps greatly to decide the chronological position of this bronze. It is, therefore, a significant specimen of the art, which proves beyond doubt the fact that to know all about a bronze, all its views, or at least both

front and back views, are essential and one should not be carried away by the front view alone. Another interesting detail seen in the delineation of the locks is that unlike in the case of Vishṇu bronzes or other bronzes where there used to be more than one series of twisted ends and where each of the braids used to be shown as being straight, here the braids are bent at the neck somewhat inartistically, which is reminiscent of the older tradition of showing the braids of Śiva in a long and wavy form. There is also the pendant with the heart-like design prominently shown. The four-faced clasp with which the girdle is decorated on this side is interesting. A similar one is seen in the so-called Choḷa Queen (Fig. 203) to be discussed below. The atrophied nature of the hips is known distinctly from this side.

The *padmāsana* is worked beautifully. The petals are broad and naturalistic. But the upper row of petals is shown nearly as big as the lower row.

The figure is thus a good and interesting specimen of the art. Although at first glance it appears to have affinities with the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 138) from the Big Temple, Tanjore, yet its new elements mentioned above show that it is later than that. It may be said to belong to the end of the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

A number of bronzes were discovered at Semaṅgalam in the Tanjore District. The most interesting of them are a Naṭeśa, a Pārvatī, a Chaṇḍikeśvara, a Gaṇeśa and a Vīṇādhara. On grounds of style they may be assigned to about this period. They are dealt with below *seriatim*.

The Naṭeśa is about 98 *cm* high, including the pedestal and about 80 *cm* broad. The Fig. 157
oblong *bhadrāsana* is separate while the figure with the Apasmāra is cast along with the elongated oval-shaped *padmāsana*. The *prabhāvaḷī* is attached to the ends of this *āsana*, and it presents the appearance of a perfect arch and so it is different from the *prabhās* met with in the Naṭeśas examined so far. Another point relating to this *prabhā* is that it seems to be perforated because of the presence of the additional ring surrounding it. This ring bears the series of flames of fire, which are larger in number than that of the Tanjore Naṭeśa (Fig. 137) and more developed in workmanship, although each one of them possesses only three tongues.

The main figure is apparently simple and its modelling and proportions are of a high order. In spite of this apparent perfection it seems to suffer from being stunted. It is probably due to the rather disproportionately large *prabhāvaḷī* and the *pīṭha*. The arms are disposed in a most pleasing manner and the head is tilted to suit the mode of dancing. There is only a single series of feathers on the head and other details on it like the cobra are rendered in a beautiful manner. The whirling locks of hair (the ends of those on the left side are broken) are depicted in a beautiful wavy pattern curling

gracefully at the tips. The two series of flower designs connecting these locks are not as elaborate as those seen in the Tanjore Naṭeśa (Fig. 137). Their very simplicity enhances the beauty of the flowing *jaṭās*. Just as in the case of the Naṭeśas examined above, here also the figure of *Gaṅgā* is conspicuous by its absence, which is a very significant characteristic of Naṭeśas belonging to periods upto about the end of Rājendra's reign. The other noteworthy details of this figure are the three-pronged shoulder ornament seen on the right side, the beautifully swaying piece of cloth on the left shoulder, the *uttarīya* which is tied to the abdomen with the loop on the right side and with its two ends twisted and flowing in a realistic manner ultimately to bifurcate and get attached to the *prabhā*, the elaborate waist-band and the *pādasaras* each with only seven *kiṅkiṇīs* each of which is shown wide apart from the other. As has been said above nothing is lacking in the modelling and consequently the limbs are beautifully finished, the torso is excellently executed and the mode of dance exceedingly well poised.

The Apasmāra Purusha is rather very small and this feature coupled with the large *padmāsana* on which this figure lies crouching, is a vestige of older traditions.

Fig. 158 The back view of the figure is equally interesting. The chief point of interest of this side lies in the peculiar manner in which the two wings of the whirling locks of hair are attached to the back of the head. In the Naṭeśas examined above, this feature is rendered differently. So, this mode is quite distinct for this bronze. This type of representation gains in importance because of its being the only known prototype of the similar detail met with, not in any other ordinary Naṭeśa, except in the famous Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa (Fig. 164) to be discussed below. This distinctive feature alone would be sufficient to say that these two bronzes are not far removed in date from each other. But there are in the latter bronze the other details also such as the single series of feathers on the crown, the large oval *padmāsana*, the slender but flowing limbs, and the nearly identical facial type, which afford sufficient support to the fact that these are really of this school.

The *bhadrāsana* is marked by an offset in the middle on the front, while no such projection is seen on the back side. Though it is separate, its characteristic mouldings and simple workmanship are enough to show that it is original. Making *bhadrāsana* separately was a new feature, met with during this period and it becomes gradually a convention. It may be remembered here the fact that the *bhadrāsana* of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa, as also the *padmāsana*, was separate but unfortunately it has not been found along with the bronze. The importance of this bronze would by now have been known, as it seems to fit into the chronological scheme proposed here. It may be dated to the fourth decade of the 11th century A.D.

The Pārvatī, about 57 *cm* high, from the same place is a beautiful specimen of its kind and is distinguished by fine proportions realistic modelling, pleasant features and restrained decorative details. Of these the short *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is noteworthy; the upper bands on the arms are interesting; the *channavīra* is peculiar, because Pārvatī figures rarely possess this; the fine garment is simple and plain but shows realistically worked bows and ends of which one is attached to the left leg; the series of bangles on the wrist is characteristic of the bronzes of this period; and the sash with shallow loop in the waist is also simple. Fig. 159

The figure stands in a very slight *bhaṅga* making it lean a little to the left. This is introduced in order to make the figure graceful. The grace is enhanced by the telling poses of the hands. Thus this is one of the significant and rare examples of a study of feminine beauty. The figure stands on a low *padmāsana* with petals marked rather indistinctly which is seen over a spare *bhadrāsana*.

The Chaṇḍikeśvara about 52 *cm* high, from the same place shares all the qualities of modelling etc., with the Pārvatī discussed above. As required by the iconography of the saint its poses and decorations are different from those of Pārvatī. The *makuṭa* is high and is distinguished by rows of twisted hair arranged in tiers which are seen both in front and back. In the Chaṇḍikeśvara (Fig. 121) from Velāṅkaṇṇi, this scheme is confined only to the back side while in the Chaṇḍikeśvaras of subsequent periods it is akin to the arrangement found in the present figure. Fig. 160

Thus this bronze is a landmark in the evolution of the figure of the saint. The face is of the slightly protruding type characteristic of bronzes of this period and its features are pleasing and the expression is one of smile. The *yajñopavīta* is depicted showing its characteristic sway in which it is seen in the bronzes of this period. The hands are in *añjali* pose holding the usual flower garland. The armlets and the string on the elbows are noteworthy. The workmanship of the loin-cloth is interesting, especially of the *siṁha-mukha* clasp which is very prominent. The *bhaṅga* of this figure is slightly more than that found in the bronze from Velāṅkaṇṇi and this emphasis of the flexion has not however added much to the beauty. The back view shows clearly the tier formation of the *makuṭa* which is tending towards stylisation. The *paṭṭa* round the head is noteworthy because of its knot, a feature which, by its occurrence in quite a few pieces of this period, seems to have been an innovation of the *sthapatis* of this period. The flower decorations on the loin-cloth are better seen here, as also the *bhaṅga*. That it is not quite well displayed is also seen here. The *padmāsana* of this bronze is worked in great detail. Both the rows of petals are distinctly seen and they are done in a realistic manner. Fig. 161

Fig. 162 The Gaṇeśa, ht. about 45 *cm*, which has been given away to the Trivandrum Museum, is an interesting study of the elephant-headed god. The *makuṭa*, the peculiar manner of depicting the animal head, the broad *kaṇṭhī*, the ornament on the right shoulder only, the naturalistic trunk, the beautiful pot-belly, realistically modelled arms and legs which have become approximated to the human limbs, the tender fingers and the restrained decorations are noteworthy in this. The flexion is very very slight and it is indicated by the slightly advanced left leg. The *āsanas* which are made together are in the characteristic style of the period, although the low *bhadrāsana* is broken at one corner. In general its style is found to be akin to that of the other bronzes of this group.

Fig. 163 The Vīṇādhara, ht. about 75 *cm*, from the same place is also of the same period. Its superb workmanship is apparent. Its noteworthy details include the now almost stylised *jaṭā-makuṭa*, the beautiful face, the broad but prominent *kaṇṭhī*, the simple pendent decoration on the right shoulder only, the *yajñopavīta* swaying rather in an inartistic manner, *nāga-valaya* armlets, the beaded elbow ornament, the shorts with wheel and flower designs and with the "sword-like" end of cloth curving gracefully towards left thigh and the tender and beautiful fingers. The modelling, as is charactertistic of the art of the times, is stout but the lines are not strained. The *padmāsana*, composed of realistically worked petals, is beautiful and the simple *bhadrāsana* goes well with it.

Fig. 164 The next bronze that claims our attention now is the famous Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu which has been so much publicised that, we may say without fear of contradiction, there will be none amongst the Indologists of the world who has not heard about it. This amazing popularity of the bronze may be said to be mainly due to the notable dessertation on it by Mr. A. Rodin and Dr. A. K. Coomarswamy in *Ars Asiatica* No. 3, 1921. The authors of the *Catalogue* has dealt with it chiefly from the point of view of dating and have assigned it at one place "to the close of the Polonnaruwa period, whenever that may have been;" (*ibid.*, p. 59) and at another place "to a Vijayanagar or later date" (*ibid.*, p. 111). The reasons given in support of the former suggestion are "(*a*) this Naṭeśa has long necklaces, (*b*) the loop in the waist-band (*i.e.* stomach-band) which is neither seen in Naṭeśa from Puṅganūr (Fig. 238), (to be discussed below), nor in Naṭeśas from Polonnaruwa and (*c*) presence of traces of flowing ends to this band on the left which are found in only one of these images....." (*ibid.*, p. 59). The reasons given for the later suggestion are (*a*) the presence of long necklaces and (*b*) the treatment in the round of the emblems of the headdress. This is in spite of their having understood, with their usual insight, the great affinity that this image has to the Naṭeśa (Fig. 137) in the Big Temple at Tanjore (*ibid.*, p. 110). Recently this image has been referred to twice by Mr. John Irwin.[1] In his study of it in *The Art of India and Pakistan*

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, pp. 68, 71, Pl. 50; and *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 32–35.

he has not given any definite date to this bronze in the introductory part; but in the descriptive part and against the illustration of the figure, it is assigned to the 11th century A.D. It is not known whether this dating is by Mr. Irwin himself. However, that he is inclined favourably to this date is known from the following statement of his. While discussing the question whether the metal worker copied from the productions of the stone worker are *vice versa*, with special reference to the Naṭarāja occurring in the temple at Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram belonging to the time of Rājendra Chola I, he says, "it is difficult to imagine how any carver could have arrived at such an unsculptural form without reference to a bronze model of the type shown at Pl. 50 and 51"[1] (*i.e.* the Naṭeśa in question and the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi). Though the suggestion here is too subtle yet one thing is clear that Mr. Irwin does not at all seem to favour the idea that the bronze belongs to the Vijayanagar period. Moreover, the fact that he has instituted a comparison between this bronze and the stone Naṭeśa at Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram is enough to show that he has perceived the identity of style between them. This therefore indirectly helps one to assign the bronze to the time of Rājendra I. But in his second reference to the bronze in his article contributed to the *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, Mr. Irwin simply lables it as "late 12th century A.D." without giving any reason. On the contrary the fact that we deal with this bronze in the present context shows our agreement with Mr. Irwin's views propounded in his first article, from which, it is unfortunate, he has retreated without justification. We have arrived at the conclusion not only on the basis of the similarity that exists between this Naṭeśa and the stone Naṭeśa of Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram but also on the basis of the examination of the development of the various details of this bronze in comparison with the similar details of bronzes belonging to earlier and later periods. It is necessary to examine it in detail to substantiate this. Its description by the authors of the *Catalogue* (pp. 111–12) is fairly complete and that given in *The Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 71) is fuller. However, we give below our description of it including therein wherever necessary notable portions from the description of it from the other two books also.

This Naṭeśa is 114.5 *cm*, high, 88 *cm* wide and 30 *cm* deep. The speciality of this bronze becomes apparent in the manner in which its headdress is done. There is a fan-shaped design of great beauty representing not "Kondrai leaves (*Cassia fistula L.*)[2]" but feathers.[3] The circular tiers of rope-like design, not "hair", are seen on the head one over the other. The lower one which is noticed just above the forehead goes round the head and into it are tucked a cobra and a "treble *Dātura*" not a "double

1 *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 68. Here we do not want to enter into a discussion about the question referred to above. But we must state that in South India a majority of the *sthapatis* have been and are experts both in metal-casting and stone-carving.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

3 These are described correctly as feathers in the *Catalogue*.

Dātura " and on which rests gently a crescent. The upper circular tier not only carried the feathers but also a skull in front and a cobra on the proper left. These emblems are worked exquisitely " in the round (as in Somāskanda from Tiruvālañgāḍu and Vishāpaharaṇa from Kīḻappūdanūr) instead of only in relief as in most of the others." [1] These designs seem to have been tied at the back. This is known from the projecting frilled ends of a piece of cloth seen on either side. " The whirling locks are missing." And their number is uncertain, not " six ". Due to the loss of the *jaṭās*, it is difficult to say if the *Gaṅgā* was represented on it or not. A *paṭṭa* goes round the forehead and it is by far the simplest of its kind. The face is round and its features are clear-cut. But they are delineated by means of incised lines, a characteristic which is found sporadically amongst bronzes belonging to the periods upto about the end of the Choḻa period and more frequently in the bronzes of the subsequent periods. Notwithstanding this aspect of workmanship, the eyes and eye-brows, the third eye and the lips appear to pulsate with life and the smiling expression radiates divine grace, a unique feature of this bronze. The right ear shows a *makara-kuṇḍala* in the extended lobe and a ring on the upper part. The left ear has a *patra-kuṇḍala* which is deep and naturalistic. On top of the ear is seen an " ornate lotus."

The neck is short but is beautifully modelled. " There are three necklaces, the uppermost as usual the smallest." [2] They consist of " a single jewelled necklace, a beaded neckcord and a rosary of *Rudrāksha* berries." [3] " All three have more or less decorative centres, that of the middle one being much the largest and having a large pendant attached to its right hand end, while that of the much longer lowest one is little or no more than the point of attachment of a slender sickle-shaped pendant." [4] The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded but one of the strands is short as usual. The *uttarīya* tied round the stomach seems to be of fine fabric and hence its thinness compared to the *uttarīyas* found in the Naṭeśa of the Big Temple, Tanjore (Fig. 137) and the Naṭeśa from Velāñkaṇṇi (Fig. 117). The manner in which it is twisted and looped is interesting and is definitely more developed than the same detail of the other two Naṭeśas referred to. Unfortunately the flowing ends of this are missing along with the *prabāvaḻī* to which they should have been attached. The navel is prominent.

As regards the torso, its exquisite workmanship is apparent from the delicate lines of the sides, the subtle but beautiful depression introduced in the modelling of the stomach portion, the gradual widening of the part above stomach, which is graceful and the beautiful treatment of the chest and the parts above. The

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 113.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[3] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 71.
[4] *Catalogue*, p. 114.

shoulders are powerful but refined. It is interesting to note that the shoulder ornament seen on the right side only is not only slender and two-stranded but also finely worked; and it swings charmingly. This kind of treatment of this ornament occurs here for the first time. On the left side between the joints of the two arms is seen the end of a piece of cloth as in other Naṭeśas. On each shoulder is seen a "chain of flowers" of ornate workmanship and of a type not met with in any of the bronzes examined above.

The arms are much the most interesting parts of this figure. It is the character of their modelling, the nature of their decoration and the manner of their disposition that have made this bronze rank with the best works of world art. The arms are apparently slightly more elongated than is required by the canons of proportions, but this elongation is not due to carelessness, nor without a purpose behind. It has been so delineated with a view to emphasise the flow of rhythm which forms the very basis of the conception of dance. Though this has already been attempted by the *sthapati* who did the Naṭeśa in the Big Temple at Tanjore, the grandeur of this idea is fully revealed only in this Naṭeśa. Of the four arms, those on the right side seem to be slightly shorter than those of the left side. This is as it ought to be. The arms on the right side being required to be shown as contracted, a certain amount of restriction on their movement becomes necessary. Even then the *sthapati*, not being able to contain himself, has shown the upper part of these arms also as long as possible. The forearms are not, however, devoid of beauty. In fact the foreshortening effect produced by the lower right hand in *abhaya* pose, is remarkable. The left arms are delineated fully, as required by their gestures and it is here that the *sthapati* has displayed his genius by showing the arms move about gracefully with ease and comfort. The upper right hand holds the *ḍamaru* in the usual way *i.e.* between the fingers and the thumb. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose. The lower left hand is in *gaja-hasta* pose while the other hand holds a big flame with nine tongues. The workmanship of this flame is also extraordinarily beautiful. Of the tongues the central one has the form of a question mark kept topsy-turvy; and our explanation about its significance given under the bronze Naṭeśa from Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi may be recalled here. All the tongues are shown in a wavy form but the waves are executed with restraint so that even when it is viewed independently of the image, it remains a work of art of absorbing interest. When it is held between the fingers and the thumb its beauty is heightened, because the arrangement of the fingers is such as to balance the tongues of the flame. So, together with the flame, the entire hand has become an exquisite design. A slender beaded band is seen on the upper arms in the place of *keyūra*. The avoidance of too many ornaments seems to be intentional. A single thick *valaya* is seen on the wrist. The serpent which should have been wound round the forearm of the lower right arm is missing. "The tail of the snake.....forms one

piece with the arm, but the greater part was evidently cast separately and is now represented only by the hole for its attachment."[1]

It is in the modelling of the arms that the *sthapati* is seen following the traditions of his time. The upper right arm is bifurcate at the elbow and the angularities of the elbows are clearly seen in the upper left arm. In spite of this, the workmanship of the arms are, as mentioned above, is superb.

The hips are subdued and the legs are as beautifully modelled as the arms. There is nothing to choose between them for grace and rhythm. If the lifted up left leg is seen flying as if it is of a material lighter than air, the planted right leg is so supple that it does not seem to bear any weight. The manner in which they are shown tapering is splendid and more beautiful than that of the arms. Here too angular features are present but they do not detract the value of the execution which is marvellous. The garment consists only of a pair of close-fitting shorts with their borders not emphasised. "The girdle is reduced to a series of ornamented threads bearing two horizontal rows of embossed lotuses; and a longer thread, each with an ornament in the middle, hangs down over it in a wide loop on each side."[2] A beautiful *pādasara* with *kiṅkiṇīs* is seen on each foot. But "there are no anklets."[3]

Fig. 165 The back view of the bronze while exemplifying remarkably the wonderful modelling, the splendid poise and the beautiful rhythm, shows, an additional interesting detail which consists of the pair of beaded strands on either side of the back hanging from the head. This is a novel feature not met with before, while in a number of bronzes of the subsequent periods a similar decorative detail becomes a characteristic.

Further, the workmanship of the headdress is also unique. The feathers are bound by a ribbon and on the left side is seen the beautiful crescent. A band is shown starting from the ribbon, which becomes wider as it goes down and at the bottom is carved a *sāmanti* flower of great beauty. This kind of design is seldom met with in any other figure. The above mentioned band seems to come over the joining line of the two wings of the whirling locks. This place is usually occupied by a *śiraś-cakra* in Naṭeśa figures. The left side of the headdress shows in addition a realistically worked tying arrangement. Besides these, the manner in which the *yajñopavīta*, the waist-bands, the tucked-up end over the waist, the strings that descend on either side from this, and the *pādasaras* with *kiṅkiṇīs* are done, is remarkable, although in some respects as for instance in the depiction of *yajñopavīta*, certain amount of conventionalisation is obvious especially when it is compared with the detail occurring in the Velāṅkaṇṇi Naṭeśa.

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 114.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] *Ibid*.

The Apasmāra Purusha is comparatively large and has features similar to those of the Purusha of the Naṭeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi. But here the face is somewhat narrow and protruding and the expression suggests amazement. The modelling of this dwarfish figure is really in the classical style as shown by the supple limbs, sparse ornamentation, the interesting postures of hands and feet and the simplicity of workmanship of drapery. The dwarf holds in his hand the snake that fell from the hand of Śiva. "A button-like ornament ..... in the middle line where the hair meets the forehead" is seen. The dwarf lies on an oval plate to which was attached the *prabhāvaḷī* which is broken and missing except for a short stump on either side. The image seems to have been cast together with the *prabhā*. Though it has not been preserved in entirety, fortunately a single flame of the series that fringed the *prabhā* has been preserved which helps us a great deal in determining the chronological position of the bronze. This flame is preserved in the stump at the proper right side, and it has only three distinct tongues with a suggestion of a fourth tongue at the bottom. We have seen that this was also the case with the Naṭeśa from the Big Temple, Tanjore and that from Velāṅkaṇṇi. Probably there were also here as many flames as there are in the other Naṭeśas referred to. Another interesting thing about the *prabhāvaḷī* is its shape. While in the Naṭeśa mentioned above, the bottom of the *prabhā* is narrow, here owing to the elongated nature of the oval plate as well as due to the elongated limbs of the figure, the *prabhā* has a wider bottom, resembling the *prabhā* of the Naṭeśa from Śivapuram. The *prabhā* in question resembles that of Śivapuram Naṭeśa in the rounded character of the props also, whereas the props of the *prabhā* of the Naṭeśas from Tanjore and Velāṅkaṇṇi are flat. All these details show that the *sthapati* has finished this *prabhā* according to the traditions of schools older than even the school of Rājarāja I.

The last item to be noticed in this bronze is the *padmāsana* which is oval in shape. None of the scholars who have dealt with this bronze have said anything about this detail. We have been saying that in the determination of the age of bronzes every one of their details has got to be examined carefully. In the bronzes examined above, the workmanship of their *āsanas* has also been helpful in arriving at their date. In this instance also the *padmāsana* is interesting, and must afford us some help in determining the date of the piece. Its petals are bold and they have two marginal lines. Their tips are thick and projecting too much. The line that demarcates the upper series of petals from the lower one is ornamented. Above all they seem to be hard. These are characteristics of the *āsana* of late Vijayanagar period. This *āsana* therefore seems to have been a substitute for the original one, and it therefore, does not help in the dating of the bronze; on the contrary it hinders and causes confusion.

Now it is necessary to state the reasons for attributing this bronze to this school. Though the emblems on the head are bold, their style is that of the sculptures of the 11th century A.D. In most of the Naṭeśas of later periods the *ḍamaru* is shown attached to

the forefinger on the outside and not as held between its fingers and the thumb; the shoulder ornament in the front side is more elaborate; an anklet is seen on the leg or legs. Ornate shoulder ornaments are seen on the back also; the *prabhā* becomes circular in form having larger number of flames, each consisting of five or more tongues on its margin which in many cases seem to have been done as a separate items and attached to a thick inner ring; *padmāsana* becomes circular; the Apasmāra Purusha is smaller, and a *śiraś-cakra* is present, as if revetting the two wings of the whirling locks. Above all a very interesting detail that is seen in all the later-day Naṭeśas is the representation of the *Gaṅgā* as a mermaid on the *jaṭās* of the right side. Upto the Naṭeśa of the Big Temple, Tanjore and that from Semaṅgalam, this detail is conspicuous by its absence because we take the *Gaṅgā* figure in the former to be a later addition. The next bronze Naṭeśa that we have examined is the one under discussion. But unfortunately its *jaṭā* are missing. It is therefore impossible to know if there was the representation of *Gaṅgā* here. We believe that probably here it was that the *motif* came to be shown for the first time. According to us this image may have been donated to the temple by Rājendra I, in commemoration of the great achievement of his reign namely the conquest of North India for which he got the title *Gaṅgai-koṇḍān*. It is not improbable that the king who bore the title of *Paṇḍitavatsala* was desirous of making the Lord of his family bear on his *jaṭās* permanently, the *lāñchana* in the form of a mermaid representing *Gaṅgā*, by which the Lord would be distinguished as *Gaṅgai-pūṇḍār*.[1] It may be mentioned that the discovery in the precincts of the temple at the place (*i.e.*, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu) of the famous copper-plate grant[2] belonging to the time of the king seems to support indirectly our proposition, because it is but meet that an epigraphical marvel is associated with an artistic wonder.

Thus in many respects this Naṭeśa is very interesting. To say that it belongs to Vijayanagar or later period does not do justice to this great bronze of Rājendra's time. It is also not justifiable to say that it may have been based on another Naṭeśa, discovered in the same place, which is almost similar to this, namely Naṭeśa No. 4 of the *Catalogue*. From the foregoing account of the Naṭeśa in question, it will be clear that the other Naṭeśa is certainly later than this, because though both of them look similar, yet as the

[1] For a discussion on this see my article "Evolution of some Iconographic Concepts," in the *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India* for 1960–61. In *S. I. I.*, Vol. II, No. 42, mention is made of the setting up in the Tanjore temple of an image of Āḍavallār with a figure of *Gaṅgā*, before the 29th year of Rājarāja I's reign. This may be said to militate against my hypothesis. But owing to the fact that the image mentioned in this epigraph has not yet been seen and that in none of the bronze Naṭeśas noticed above including the one in that temple itself, this detail is met with as an integral item, it is not known how this detail was actually represented in a figure of Naṭeśa before Rājendra I's time. Perhaps then it was made separately and attached to the *jaṭās* of a Naṭeśa. If this is so, making this detail an integral item of a Naṭeśa figure was perhaps settled during this king's time.

[2] *S. I. I.*, Vol. III, p. 381.

authors of the *Catalogue* have put it, "the two images differ considerably, however, in other details, especially the treatment of the emblems in the headdress which are shown in ordinary low relief in the smaller image (*i.e.*, No. 4) whereas in the larger one (*i.e.*, the one under discussion) they are shown in the round." To this we may add that the smaller Naṭeśa shows anklets also; its *prabhā* has developed into two distinct parts namely the border line with flame and the thick inner part: the tongues of the flames are probably more than three and the dwarf is shown as of little consequence. These are characteristics of images of later periods than the one to which the Naṭeśa under discussion is assigned. Hence it is likely that the smaller image was made on the model of the larger one at a later date.

For the same reasons, the Naṭeśa from Puṅganūr (Fig. 238) to be dealt with below has to be dated later than the Naṭeśa under discussion. Although there is at least similarity in conception and treatment between the smaller Naṭesa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu and the bigger one, that is the one under discussion, from the same place, between the Puṅganūr one and the bigger Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa very few details are common; further there is a vast difference in treatment between them. In spite of this, the authors of the *Catalogue* have assigned the place of honour to the Puṅganūr Naṭeśa and has based their estimate of other Naṭeśas on its style. No doubt the Puṅganūr Naṭeśa has its own merits but its details such as the presence of *Gaṅgā* on the *jaṭās*, the holding of a *ḍamaru* tied to the forefinger, the presence of anklets on both legs and the presence of the angularities being so obviously later in date than those of the Naṭeśa under discussion, that it is difficult to appreciate the view that it is earlier than the bigger Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa dealt with above.

On the above mentioned grounds, this Naṭeśa may be assigned to about the fourth decade of the 11th century A.D.

The Tripurāntaka group from Tranquebar, Tanjore District, may be said to belong Fig. 166
to about the same period. Though the characteristic manner of showing the bifurcation of the arms and the *bhaṅga* are identical with that of the Devasenāpati (Fig. 106) from Tiruviḍaikkaḷi, the other details especially the plumpy modelling and the ornaments prove that this group belongs to the period under study. The presence of the original figure of the goddess is very useful.

Owing to weathering, the details of the figure of Tripurāntaka have been worn out. So the objects on the *jaṭā-makuṭa* are not seen. But the *kaṇṭhīs*, *yajñopavīta*, *udara-bandha* etc., are better preserved. Of the emblems, the deer is preserved and the manner of holding it is interesting. The poses of the two arms intended to hold the bow and arrow are deftly represented. Similar is the case with the postures of the legs. Much

of the beauty of modelling and of the stance of the figure can however be known only
Fig. 167 from the back view. It is only here that traces of the *vāji-bandhas* on the elbows are seen. The wheel designs on the cloth are prominently seen in this view.

The figure of the goddess is interesting for its graceful *dvi-bhaṅga*, flowing lines of the arms and the legs and the beautiful but slightly plumpy modelling. These together with the rendering of the facial features make it undoubtedly a product of one and the same *sthapati*. The *kaṭaka* and *lola* poses of the arms are beautifully depicted as also the garment and the waist-band. The ornaments are not many. The headgear is probably a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*. That the cloth is decorated with creeper etc., designs as in the case of the male figure is seen clearly only from the back view. It is only from this side it is seen that the *nūpura* is made of several rings.

The composition of two figures, one in a mild motion and the other in greater motion, seems to be quite a good convention as it is aesthetically appealing and satisfying. Hence this group may be said to be another important specimen of the art as obtained during this period.

Each of the figures stands on a *padmāsana* which is also worn out much. The traces of the petals that are visible make the pedestals to be not of much interest.

Fig. 168 A very important bronze of this school is the one which represents Śoḷa-mā-devī,[1] one of the queens of Rājarāja I, which was originally in the Śiva temple at Kālahasti in the Chittoor District. Its chief interest lies in the fact that it has an inscription saying that "it was cast under the orders of Rājendra-choḷa-deva by Niccappaṭṭālagaṉ, obviously the sculptor."[2] That the inscription is of the reign of Rājendra I is testified to by its palaeography which was examined by one of the authors of the *Catalogue* (p. 31). Probably this has led Professor Nilakanta Sastri to declare that this is, "the only portrait of the reign of Rājendra I."[3] Its details are therefore specially noteworthy because they give us a firm basis for the stages of their development during this period as well as an idea about the development of the art of bronzes of the period in general. In fact some of the clinching characteristics that distinguish the style for which the school of Rājendra I was noted are found in this bronze. This only goes to confirm the evidence of date furnished by the inscription. These will be known from the description of the figure given below.

The hair is dressed in a *dhammilla* form. The bun-like headdress, unlike that of the Sītā from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 96) is not vertical. Though it can be clearly seen only in the back view, of which we unfortunately do not have a photograph, the

[1] T. G. Aravamudhan, *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, p. 37, Fig. 12.
[2] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas* (1955), p. 726.
[3] *Ibid.*

projection of the bottom part of the headdress beyond the left ear is enough to show this. There are three or four *kuṭila-kuntalas* on either side of the groove that divides the hair into two sections and on the groove itself is seen a fine little pendant.

As has already been pointed out, the face of this figure is protruding. The eyes and eyebrows are indicated not by distinct lines but by means of almond-like form and thick ridges. The nose is sharp and slightly broad. The manner in which the upper lip is depicted has made all the difference in the character of the countenance. Ears are not adorned. The expression suggests calmness and tender feeling. A broad *kaṇṭhī* with a series of bud-like pendants is all that adorns the neck.

The treatment of the torso is interesting. The chest has become narrow and consequently the breasts, which are full and show prominent nipples, seem to be squeezed in a rather unnatural manner. Lines of the sides, making nearly a sharp angle at the stomach, are also well illustrated here. The portion around the navel is however delineated with feeling. The shoulder ornament is seen on either side and it is interesting to note that the ornament is yet in its simple style. The additional curved or looped ornament, which, as we shall see below, begins to characterise the bronzes of the subsequent periods is significantly absent from this. The flower-decked braid of hair is seen on either shoulder with its tip hanging low.

The treatment of the arms is not very much upto the mark. They are thick-set and comparatively short. The interesting details seen here are the ornaments. The *keyūras* are of a most unusual type, having the form of a full-blown lotus flower,[1] with big festoons hanging from their bands. The elbow ornaments are sufficiently prominent with the characteristic projecting bit on them. The series of slender bangles held together by means of cross-bands on the wrists are similar to those of a number of bronzes representing goddesses. Turning to the modelling of the arms, certain amount of stiffness is apparent and it is well displayed by the left arm which is in *lola* pose. The angular turn that the left hand takes at the wrist points to this clearly. The right fore-arm is kept up at right angles to the body and this hand holds a beautiful lily worked realistically as though blossoming just now. Though the arms are not modelled in a beautiful manner, the style in which the fingers are done evokes admiration.

Coming to the garment and girdle, they "are very like those of Sītā (Fig. 96) from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr and the *devīs* of Śrīnivāsa (Fig. 99) from Sirupaṇaiyūr though the folds of the cloth are much closer." This feature is akin to that of the Chaṇḍikeśvara [2]

1 *Catalogue*, p. 31.
2 *The Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 59, Fig. 316; and *Catalogue*, p. 131.

belonging to the Cotton collection now in the Eton College, England and the worshipper [1] (Fig. 184) from Kandarakoṭṭai, South Arcot District. It must be mentioned here that though the treatment of the folds is similar in nearly all of them, yet the delineation of other details considerably varies amongst them. The festoons are of broad loops and a prominent pendant is attached to each of them which is not found in this manner in other bronzes. The tassels between the festoons seem to be of cloth and this is suggested by the frilling at their ends. The girdle is broad and decorated with oblong bits shown in relief. The clasp in front is simple. The end of cloth hanging on the right side is obviously ornate. The cup-shaped design just below the navel here develops a slight elevation on either side which is not met with in any other bronze discussed above. The other end of cloth hanging between the legs has almost covered the space. The thick line of the border of the cloth is noteworthy.

Just as the arms, the modelling of the legs too is stiff and this is known especially from the left leg. The *bhaṅga* of the right leg would have been better had it not been for the prominence given to the knee-cap which, as has been seen above, has been receiving more and more attention as time passed on. The feet bear *pādasaras* of the usual type. There are also the *nūpuras* on the ankle; the one on the right ankle is simpler while that on the left ankle shows grooves on it. This detail is appearing in this form for the first time here, although we have seen *nūpuras* of a distinctly different type occurring in the *devīs* of the Sirupaṇaiyūr Śrīnivāsa group (Fig. 99). In the latter *devīs* the *nūpuras* are archaic in form being only a slender bar wound round the ankles. That the *nūpuras* of the bronze under discussion are much more evolved goes without saying. It must be mentioned here that, though in the male figures this detail becomes an invariable feature since its first appearance as an additional leg ornament, in the female figures this does not seem to have become such an invariable concomitant, as will be seen below.

The figure stands in the *dvi-bhaṅga* pose on a circular *paḍmāsana* which is beautifully worked.

Thus, this bronze is a good specimen of the art of bronzes of the school we are considering here. So, its affinity to the Kaṇṇappanāyanār from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 180) is greater although its style is continued in the Kulottuṅga bronze (Fig. 242) also, which is a much later one.[2] It shows quite a few interesting details such as ornaments of the arms which, though found in other specimens, are here seen as though attended to with special care. As regards its quality, as has been said above, much

[1] T. G. Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, Fig. 19; and *Catalogue*, p. 138.

[2] So, clubbing of all the three and assigning them to the same date as is done in *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 68, is not possible.

cannot be said especially when we have examined quite a number of bronzes belonging to this school itself which are noted for grace and excellence of workmanship.

Regarding the point whether this bronze is an actual portrait or not we give here the opinion of A.K. Coomaraswamy with which we are in complete agreement. He says: "It seems to me that as regards the term "portrait statues", the available examples in almost every case ought to be called effigies rather than portraits in the ordinary sense of the word; they do as a rule reproduce the details of contemporary costume, but as representations they are types rather than individualised portraits. It is noteworthy that in the *Pratimā Nāṭaka*, Bharata is not only unable to recognise the statues of his own father, but cannot tell whether the figures in the *devakula* represent gods or human beings, though the latter view is suggested to his mind by the fact that they are not provided with any distinctive attributes. In any case the extant figures cannot be said to disprove "the theory of Hindu disinclination to realism." In this connection reference may be made to Śukrācārya, *Śukranītisāra* IV. 4, 76, where the making of likeness, of mortals "even with their characteristic features accurately depicted" is called *asvargya* "not leading to heaven." On the other hand this very passage is evidence that portraits were actually made, and we must not forget that there is ample literary evidence for the making of realistic, that is easily recognizable, painted portraits, at least from the Gupta period onwards, and that such portraits are extant from the Gupta period onwards, and that such portraits are extant from the seventeenth century onwards."[1]

The Naṭeśa with Śivakāmasundarī from Puñjai in the Tanjore District, Fig. 169 may be examined next. That both the figures of this group are marvellous specimens of the art are apparent. Although the Naṭeśa may appear to have an early look, that its place is after that of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa is known at once from the rather stiff and manneristic *jaṭās* which are rather short and do not reach even the inner edge of the *prabhā*; the presence of the *Gaṅgā* on the uppermost *jaṭā* of the right side, the faulty modelling of the stomach part, the prominent wheel designs on the shorts, the rather too elongated limbs especially the left arm and left leg and too slender modelling of the latter, the sylisted flames of the *prabhā* as well as of the flame held in the palm of the upper left arm and the incurving beginnings of the props of the *prabhā*, showing *makara* heads. It is not known if the *bhadrāsana* is original; because there are provisions on either side of it for a subsidiary figure. On the proper right side is found a seated four-armed figure in the posture of playing upon a musical instrument. Such accompaniments are met with in Naṭeśa figures belonging to later periods; and so, their occurrence here shows that they are most probably later additions. The work-

[1] Forward to the *Portrait Sculpture in South India* by T. G. Aravamuthan, pp. x-xi.

manship of subsidiary figure itself, not being characteristic of the period, seems to furnish a proof for its later date, and consequently for a later date for the *āsana* also. This being the first Naṭeśa with *Gaṅgā* on its *jaṭās*, the manner in which this detail is worked requires scrutiny. Unlike many a later Naṭeśa where this detail is given prominence, its subdued character indicates as though the *sthapati* was introducing it with great caution born out of the thought that he should not transgress the limits of ancient traditions suddenly.

In spite of the above mentioned details which indicate the position of the Naṭeśa as later than that of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa, the bronze possesses certain fine qualities which are rarely met with in similar works of subsequent periods. They are the single row of spread-out feathers on the head similar to that of the other Naṭeśa mentioned above, the square face with highly realistic features noteworthy amongst which are the beautiful nose, lips and chin, the splendidly depicted calm expression, the serpent with raised hood on the uppermost *jaṭā* on the left side introduced to balance the *Gaṅgā* on the opposite side, the broad, powerful and well-finished shoulders and chest, smoothly finished arms with hands in expressive gestures and possessing realistically worked fingers and slender but beautiful feet, especially the foot lifted up, having toes which are so delineated as to throb with life. Except for the slender modelling of the limbs and the inartistic bend of the stomach part, this Naṭeśa may be considered as a great masterpiece. The additional details of the figure to be mentioned here are the simple, single, beautiful rosary of *Rudrāksha* berries on the neck, the *pādasara* of *kiṅkiṇīs* on the feet and the elongated oval *padmāsana* to the ends of which are attached the props of the flat *prabhā*. A series of seventeen flames each of three tongues including the one at the apex is shown along the fringe of it at regular intervals. But for the rather inartistic shrink at the commencement, the *prabhā* may be said to add to the glory of the figure. The sparse ornamentation is a noteworthy feature which has been noticed in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa also.

The dwarf below the right foot of Śiva is a chubby little fellow and is full of realistic features. The arrangement of the hair, the modelling of the stomach and legs and the restrained decoration are especially noteworthy.

Śivakāmasundarī is a beautiful figure, and its modelling and simple *ābhaṅga* stance are exquisite. The round chubby face together with splendidly embellished *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is superb. The torso with the beautifully depicted breasts is a fine study. The arms are well done but the left arm seems to be somewhat disproportionate. The hip portion again is excellently modelled, and the legs are executed with consummate skill. The double lotus circular *padmāsana* is quite appropriate to the figure. Thus except for one or two minor deficiencies, this may be said to be a gem of a bronze. This is one of

the rare Naṭeśa groups containing the original goddess image too. This group may be dated to about the fourth decade of the 11th century A.D.

The Gaṇeśa from the same place may be easily said to belong to the same period as the above Naṭeśa. Unlike the latter in which a few minor defects are noticed, this bronze may be said to be almost a perfect representation of the deity and a beautiful one at that. In nearly every respect, this bronze is found to be exactly similar to the one from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 117). But here the details such as the trunk, the limbs and the *āsana* are more evolved and hence its position here. Fig. 170

The bronze Rāma from the Sundaraperumāḷ temple at Valarpuram in North Arcot District may be examined next. It is about 80 *cm* high and stands in the graceful *dvibhaṅga* posture. At first sight it will look like the Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr and one will therefore wonder why it is dealt with here. Fig. 171

But a closer and more careful examination of it will show the developed state of its workmanship in every aspect and its similarity to other bronzes of Rājendra I's school. No doubt we have to grant this much that in its modelling and finish the *sthapati* had recaptured some of the notable qualities of earlier traditions.

Unlike the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr Rāma this has a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* and that it is a later one is apparent from the style of the *kirīṭa* itself. Instead of being cylindrical it is almost conical surmounted by a developed and prominent knob. An interesting thing about the knob is that near the top it is worked as if opening out. Its embellishments seem to be in very low relief. The workmanship of the fillet is ornate. The face is square and its features are sharp. The eyes are done in a style similar to that of the eyes of Śoḷa-mā-devī from Kālahasti (Fig. 168). The nose has become prominent and somewhat pointed, with the result the expression is not so delightful, as that of the Rāma from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr. *Makra-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears. They are exquisitely worked. As is characteristic of the images of this period, the heads of the *makaras* fall on the shoulders. The neck is thick and somewhat short for the figure. There are three necklaces of which the middle one is broad and net-like. The lowest has a small pendant hanging from its middle part. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded with a simple knot, as usual, on the left chest. The strands are shown in a beautiful wave form and the longest of them is seen to descend to the waist and go under the loin-cloth. The *udara-bandha* is broad and ornamented. Regarding the torso, the characteristic strain of the lines of the sides is apparent on the right side while the line of the left side, unlike those of the earlier bronzes, has become stiff with somewhat a sharp bulging below the level of the stomach. The mass is treated confidently and power is suggested admirably by the breadth of the chest and the prominence of the shoulders as befit the theme. There are

the ornamental strands of hair on either shoulder. But interestingly the shoulder ornament is seen only on the right side. It is to be noted that this is not of the elaborate type met with in the earlier bronzes; nor does it seem to have been worked with care and attention. Though, showing of this ornament on the right side only was not a characteristic of this school, yet in view of the fact that this bronze seems to have been made to order by a royal personage or chief, the *sthapati* probably took delight in displaying his knowledge of ancient traditions in his work. But nevertheless the way in which he has delineated this ornament shows clearly that the *sthapati* could not catch up the spirit of the ancient traditions because of the environment and atmosphere of his time which seem to have prevailed upon him.

The modelling of the arms of this bronze does not seem to be different from that of bronzes examined just above, although due to the size and other considerations of this bronze it is well chastened. But characteristically the angularities are emphasised; and even the fingers which used to be delicate, tender and full of feeling seem to have lost these qualities to some extent. However, the postures of arms are rendered with understanding. Regarding the ornaments of the arms, the pronged *keyūra* is exquisitely worked and it shows festoons. As in several bronzes to be examined presently here also the *vāji-bandha* with prominent projecting bit is seen on both elbows. A series of three stiff bangles is seen on each wrist.

The thighs and the legs are thick and the lines composing them tend to be stiff. The knee-caps are distinctly shown. The loin-cloth of this figure is of disphanous character but it has on it beautiful wavy parallel lines enclosing nicely worked creeper designs. It has the characteristic thin border composed of lines. The girdle does not seem to exist as a distinct entity and seems to have become merged with the loin-cloth itself. The *siṁha-mukha* clasp is seen somewhat distinctly but there is no doubt about its being in a developed stage. The horn-like strands emanating from it are only thin and insignificant. The loop-like projections from the sides of its mouth enclose a gem-set ornament worked like the teeth of the animal. The sword-like design hanging from this ornament has all the character of the tongue of the animal. On either side of this is seen a short tassel on the thighs. The feet are adorned with *pādasaras*. On the left ankle is seen a triple *nūpura*. Its importance is easily seen from the manner in which it is done. It must be mentioned here that the extra *nūpuras* are seen prominently only here for the first time while in the bronzes that belong to later periods it becomes an invariable item of decoration. In the sculptures of the earlier periods as for example the sculptures of the Big Temple at Tanjore, the Vasishṭheśvara of Karundaṭṭāṅguḍi, the Vīraṭṭāṇeśvara of Kaṇḍiyūr and the Nāgeśvara temple of Kumbhakoṇam, this detail is not present. But that this feature had become more or less an invariable characteristic of the sculptures of

this period is known from its presence in the sculptures of the temple at Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-cholapuram[1], *e.g.*, the Chaṇḍeśānugrahamūrti. It may therefore be said that this detail was a significant contribution of the school of Rājendra I.

Coming to the back view of the figure, the *śiraś-cakra* is beautifully worked in the shape of a full-blown flower enclosed by a ring. From the central knob of it hangs an ornate tassel. The braided locks of hair are apparently developed. It is known not only from their heavy twist but also from their large number and close arrangement. The characteristic pendant hanging from below these braids is treated only in a sketchy fashion. This, together with its slanting position, is another piece of evidence for the date of the bronze. The beauty of the slender *yajñopavīta* is seen clearly from this side. Here it is seen in two thick strands of which the longer one bifurcates into two, just below the *udara-bandha*. It is one of these two very thin strands that goes beneath the loin-cloth. The details of this cloth are prominent here, especially the border. The treatment of the girdle is very interesting, particularly the rosette-shaped clasp seen in the top-most band. The long ornamental middle part of the bottom-most band too is fine. Fig. 172

That the modelling of this bronze is definitely inferior is borne out by the manner in which the hips and the buttocks are done. The treatment of the legs too, is not so good and it supports the above remark.

On the arms the bands of the *keyūras* are tied in a beautiful knot, and the projecting bits of the *vāji-bandha* are seen clearly from the side.

The figure stands on a circular *padmāsana*. Its style when compared with the style of the same *āsana* of a number of earlier bronzes, and especially with the *āsana* of the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr Rāma, will be seen to be much inferior. The tenderness and realism met with in the earlier *āsanas* have become rare here. The petals of the lower row are larger than those of the upper row.

In spite of the above criticism the effect produced by the totality of the figure is nevertheless good, mainly because of the good proportions, delicate ornamentation, large size and beautiful posture. So, it may be said to be one of the best examples of the school and may be dated to about the end of the reign of Rājendra I.

The bronze representing Rājamannār or Kṛishṇa from the same place as the above figure, is similar to that except for the following details. Fig. 173

It has a *jaṭā-makuṭa*; its ornamentation is peculiar and it is delicately worked; the fillet is thick and it is shown in relief; earrings are not present; *yajñopavīta* is single-stranded with beautiful waves in it; the shoulder ornament is very slender and its tip

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 57.

seems to bear beads; *nāga-valaya* type of *keyūras* with exquisitely worked heads decorate the arms; the left arm is in the posture of leaning against something; the end
Fig. 174 of cloth hanging from the *simha-mukha* is frilled. At the back the most interesting detail is the curls of hair arranged horizontally in eight tiers. An example of this type of hair-dressing has already been seen in the Kirāta bronze (Fig. 156) from Rādhānarasiṁhapuram as well as in the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Semaṅgalam (Fig. 160). As has been stated above while discussing the latter bronzes, this detail is a contribution of this school. The other interesting details are the knot of the fillet, the two rows of clusters of braided hair which has lost all its naturalism and has become almost conventionalised; the insignificant pendant shown in the same slanting position as in that of the above Rāma; the fan-like end of cloth tucked at the middle of the waist above the girdle; the rosette-like clasp of the girdle and the close parallel lines enclosing geometric and floral designs of the garment.

In view of its being similar to the Rāma in every other respect, there seems to be no doubt that this may also have been produced by the same *sthapati* who made the Rāma.

Fig. 175 The Bhikshāṭaṇa from Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District, now in the Tanjore Art Gallery, may be taken up next. As has been said above, its date is fixed as 1048 A.D. from an inscription in the Śiva temple in the village. This is the second bronze representing this deity that we examine here.

The hair is dressed up in the fashion of *keśa-bhāra* with the ends of hair shown gracefully twisted behind while there is also a short conical *jaṭā-makuṭa* on the head. A skull in high relief is displayed on it. A serpent and the crescent moon are shown respectively on the right and left wings of the *keśa-bhāra*. Fillet is worked with tassels, and there is a thick knob-like ornament in the centre probably representing a *cūḍā-maṇi*. Right ear is empty while the left ear shows a refined *patra-kuṇḍala*. The face is square and its treatment is beautiful. The depiction of the eyes is especially fine. The pendent ornament is seen on the right shoulder. But the necklets are treated in a novel way. Of the three necklaces, the middle one seems to be a *kaṇṭhī* made of *svarṇa*. Here also the third necklace is a long *hāra* hanging far below. The *yajñopavīta* of this figure also shows two strands, like the Kalyāṇasundara. The figure is nude and there is nothing else on the waist except a serpent with raised hood which serves the purpose of a waist-band. Its hood is on the left side of the figure and the broad median loop formed of the body of the serpent is beautiful from the point of view of design and execution. Instead of the *keyūra* with prongs, the *nāga-valaya* type of armlets are seen. The other usual ornaments including *vāji-bandhas* are present. The manner of disposing of the four arms is tasteful and the skilful joining of the additional arms speaks volumes about

the prefection attained in this technique by the *sthapati*. The upper right hand holds gently the kettle-drum between its thumb and middle finger. The emblem held in the corresponding left hand is missing. The lower right hand is in the posture of fondling the young deer which is shown jumping up to reach the fingers of this hand. The lower left hand holds a shallow cup. The legs are stout and a new ornament in the form of a band with a *kiṅkiṇī* hanging from it in front is worn round the right and left calf. A few figures with *nūpuras* adorning one of their legs have been examined above and they have been assigned to the last decade of reign of Rājendra I. The occurrence of the *kiṅkiṇī*-tied band around the calf of this Bhikshāṭana is extremely significant not only because it confirms our hypothesis but also because of this ornament becoming the prototype for a similar ornament occurring in almost all the icons representing the various aspects of Śiva of the subsequeet periods.

At the back, the only noteworthy detail is the ornament pendent from the neck. **Fig. 176** But the manner in which the hair is dressed is also interesting although its details are not clear. That its form is quite different from that of the Tirunāmanallūr Bhikshāṭana is obvious, and this shows clearly the freedom enjoyed by the *sthapatis* of ancient times in the matter of depicting the various details of an icon. The animal accompanying the deity is equally well finished, and its treatment is tender and delicate. As is characteristic of the bronzes of this period the modelling of this bronze is rather heavy which makes the figure look stunted. Nevertheless, both as a fine study of a nude figure and as one said to be dated, this bronze is an extremely useful specimen of the art.

The second Vishṇu from Paruttiyūr may be assigned to the same period to which **Fig. 177** the above bronze is assigned. A striking feature of this bronze is its slender modelling. Besides, its face is of the protruding type. It has a slightly stunted *kirīṭa*, the close-fitting garment, the sash with narrow loop and a beautiful *gadā*. The emblems are ornate and there is a pendent ornament on each shoulder. As has been seen in the other Śrīnivāsa and Vishṇu figures, this figure also has a chain with a pendant hanging in between the legs. The arms and legs are beautifully modelled as also the *padmāsana*. Its smooth finish makes it look like an early work. In view of the developed features like the protruding face this bronze may be assigned to about the middle of the 11th century A.D.

Here may be added the bronze said to represent the king Narasiṅga-munaiyadaraiyar[1] **Fig. 178** from Tirunāmanallūr in South Arcot District. Its style is seen to be nearly identical with that of the above discussed Rāma, Rājamannār and Vishṇu. But here the modelling is worse than in the other. This is especially noticed in the uncouth manner of depicting the shoulders and hips. The defective waist has resulted in the unnatural

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 405, 727; Fig. 36.

posture of the legs which are otherwise modelled well. Regarding its identification a word may be said. In view of the fact that no image of a man is endowed with a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* as is seen in this, it may not represent the chief. On the other hand from the characteristic poses of the hands, coupled with other decorative details, its affinity to the Rāma figures like the one discussed above is close. It may therefore be a representation of that prince of princes.

Fig. 179 The seated Buddha[1] attended by Nāgarājas from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam may be said to belong to about this time. It has been dealt with adequately by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran on pp. 45–46 of his book.[2]

It is necessary to point out that though the flame on the head of the Buddha appears to be three-tongued yet on close examination there is no doubt that this feature has evolved further from that of the smaller standing Buddha from the same place (Fig. 152). Though the modelling and the median loop of the *uttarīya* tied round the waists of the Nāgarājas may suggest an early date for the composition, the ornate *kaṇṭhīs* numbering more than three, the evolved *karaṇḍa-makuṭas*, the short *patra-kuṇḍalas*, the comparatively short arms, the slightly protruding faces etc. of these figures are proofs enough to show that the date of the piece is about the middle of the 11th century A.D.

The last two words of the description are all that give us an idea of Mr. Ramachandran's opinion about the date of the bronze. By 'Late Choḷa' he must mean the period between 1100–1350 A.D., a division of the duration of the historical periods of South India propounded by Mr. Jouveau Dubreuil which has been adopted more or less as the working basis by Mr. Ramachandran too as is evident from his defining the late Choḷa period as lying between 1070 and 1250 A.D. in his book (p. 54).

If this is so, the period being too long, there is the necessity to specify the plausible sub-division of this period to which this bronze may be assigned. This has not been done. Even supposing that Mr. Ramachandran has meant the earliest of the beginning phase of this period, owing to the stylistic affinities of the details of this bronze to the bronzes described above that attribution will be late by a few decades. This is known from the style of the figure itself and hence we have assigned it to the period under discussion. A significant historical fact may be mentioned here. It pertains to the building of a Buddhist *vihāra* at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam by the Sailendra king Māravijayottuṅgavarman of Sumātra about the beginning of the 11th century, for which villages were granted by Rājarāja I, the endowment being confirmed latter on by his son Rājendra I.[3] It may be reasonable to expect that it was the sponsors of this noble project of the building of

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, Pl. I.

[2] See also A. Aiyappan and P. R. Srinivasan, *Story of Buddhism with special reference to South India*, pp. 95–97, Fig. 20; and *The Art of India and Pakistan*, pp. 77–78, Pl. 60, Fig. 331.

[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17.

the *vihāra* or their immediate successors that may have arranged to provide the *vihāra* with beautiful *utsava-vigrahas* (processional images) such as the Buddha under discussion. In fact of all the bronzes of the 11th century, this is easily one of the best. The style of the bronzes of the 12th century being different from that of the bronzes of the 11th century and this Buddha being more akin in style, as mentioned above, to bronzes noticed above, the date assigned to it by us seems to be more or less reasonable. In the circumstances the 13th century date given to it in *The Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 77) requires to be changed.

The bronze representing Kaṇṇappanāyanār[1] the hunter saint of Śaivism from Tiruvā- Fig. 180
laṅgāḍu may be said to belong to about the same period to which the above Buddha is assigned. It is 50 *cm* high. The figure stands in *ābhaṅga* posture on an indistinctly worked *padmāsana*. Its youthful features are in accordance with the tradition that Kaṇṇappa was a young prince of hunters at the time he became the saint. The hands are in *añjali* pose. The headdress is of the *keśa-bandha* type and it is decorated with peacock's feathers. In the place where a *paṭṭa* is usually seen, a series of small clusters of hair are seen, probably intended as *kuṭila-kuntalas* as seen in a number of figures especially of women.

The face is interesting. It distinctly projects in front, a characteristic which has been seen in some of the male figures. It is interesting to note that the face of the Apasmāra Purusha figure seen under the foot of Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu is also of this type. Moreover the faces of the portraits of Śoḷa-mā-devī (Fig. 168) and Kulottuṅga III (Fig. 242) found in the temple at Kālahasti, a place not far from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu are also of this type. It seems that this was a facial type developed locally in the Chittoor District in ancient times. Another interesting thing about the face is that while the nose is naturalistically depicted, the eyes and eye-brows are indicated by lines just as in the case of Naṭeśa from the same place. This does not mean that these bronzes are late. For, in spite of this, the expression on the face is beautiful just because of the handling of the other details deftly. In the case of later bronzes the manner of depicting the eyes etc., by lines produces a jarring effect because of the deterioration in workmanship of other details. Lips are also extremely life-like and the feeling expressed by them in combination with that of the eyes is one of child-like innocence which was the special quality of the youthful saint. There are short but wide *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears.

The perfection of modelling and proportions is apparent in the torso of the figure; and the restrained decorative embellishment of this part invests it with a classical quality. The neck is smooth and rounded. The lines of the sides are beautiful and pleasing. The nipples are simple but natural. The rosary of beads which is long and hanging in a broad loop is noteworthy for its simplicity of workmanship and graceful sway. For its small size, the shoulders of the figure are done suggesting vigour,

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 133.

quite appropriate to the theme. The slender and tapering modelling of arms met with in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa characterises the arms of this figure also. This is especially seen in the depiction of the upper arms and the fingers. A beaded bracelet is seen on each wrist. The manner in which the *añjali* pose is executed is superb and this has added tremendously to the beauty of the whole figure.

As in nearly all the bronzes of this school, in this bronze also the hips are not emphasised but the *sthapatis* of the period seem to have been great adepts in the depiction of the *ābhaṅga* posture which requires a slight bend at one of the hips which, while continuing the line of the side down the thigh and leg to the end of the big toe, keeps its flow rhythmic and beautiful. This figure remarkably illustrates the capacity of its maker in this respect too. The designing and delineation of the costume which "consists of a loin-cloth, covered in front with a short apron, the latter secured by a girdle" are not only tasteful but also quite in keeping with the quality of workmanship of the entire figure. The girdle consists of three beaded bands and two simple ones which are shown alternately. This decoration has been finished in a splendid manner with the addition of a slightly wavy thread with a pendant tied to its tip shown on each thigh. The apron shows a thin border. "A dagger hangs from the girdle at the proper right side." The treatment of the legs is also as beautiful as that of the upper part. However, the emphasis laid on the knee-caps has disturbed to some extent the otherwise perfect flow of the lines that compose the legs. Nevertheless their exquisite proportions and fine posture prove the fact that the bronze is a masterpiece. The simple rustic chapals worn on the
Fig. 181 feet are interesting. The gracefulness of the figure is clearly seen from the back view. Details to be noted specially in this side, are the back side of the headgear, the modelling of the torso, the *carmāmbara* (animal hide serving as cloth) which reveals underneath the loin-cloth with its folds indicated by closely incised lines, and the beautiful stance.

The *padmāsana* of this bronze has the usual form but few details are worked on it. In spite of this, its form is akin to that of a number of bronzes of this period and of the earlier periods as for instance that of the Gaṇeśa from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 119).

Fig. 182 The next bronze that seems to come immediately after the above is the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi in the Tanjore District. At the first glance itself its classical qualities will impress a beholder. According to the traditions of the school of Rājendra I, the *jaṭā-makuṭa*, as every one of the other details, is treated in a refined manner. There is the flower, here much atrophied, on top. The pronged ornament in front is sketchy but it is decorated with festoons. Above this ornament, are seen two series of clusters of hair one above the other. The *paṭṭa* over the forehead is decorated with festoons. The face is round and its treatment reminds one of the face of Chaṇḍikeśvara from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 121) or of the Vishṇu (Fig. 123) from Peruntoṭṭam. The ears are empty. The expression on the face suggests serenity.

There are three necklaces of which the middle one is broad and decorated with a series of small bud-like things. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded; but it is comparatively thin. The *udara-bandha* is also simple. The treatment of the torso is almost similar to that of the Kaṇṇappanāyanār examined above and is therefore beautiful. The shoulders too are worked in a beautiful manner. The shoulder ornament is seen on the right side only. The hair that falls on top of either shoulder is only suggested, not boldly treated. The pronged *keyūras* on the arms show festoons. At the elbows are seen simple bands without the projecting bit. Three stiff bangles adorn each wrist. The modelling of the arms is exquisite and their proportions defeat comparison. The hands in *añjali* pose, hold between them a rosary of beads.

The hips are subdued; but the thighs and the legs are not only of good proportions but are treated in a soft and refined manner. Emphasis on the knee-caps is seen here also; but it is kept within bounds so that the beauty of the legs is not marred. The loin-cloth is simple and its border is indicated by a pair of thin grooves. The waist-band and the sashes too are simple. The *siṁha-mukha* clasp is not ornate and it does not show the usual threads emanating from its head. The *padmāsana* is circular and beautiful; but its petals show the marginal lines more prominently and farther from the periphery. The two rows of them have been equally emphasised. Thus in every respect this bronze seems to be a good specimen of the school of Rājendra I. It may be dated to about the beginning of the third quarter of the 11th century.

An interesting group of Tripurāntaka with Tripurasundarī of small size about 45 *cm* high from Iḍumbāvaṇam in the Tanjore District may also be assigned to this period. It is locally called as Sarguṇanāthasvāmi. But iconographically the above identification seems to be called for. It may appear to be Umāsahita. If so, the lower hands of Śiva must be in the poses of *varada*, *abhaya* and *āhūya-varada* poses. They are not seen in this Śiva and therefore this group does not represent Umāsahita. It may be said that as the same hands of Śiva are in the posture of holding a *vīṇā*, this Śiva may represent Vīṇādhara. No doubt if there was the figure of Śiva alone, then it may be said to represent that aspect of the Lord. We have said above while discussing the Tripurāntaka from the Big Temple, Tanjore, that when figures of Śiva with hands in poses as in the present case are accompanied by figures of Umā then there can be little doubt that they represent Tripurāntaka because Śiva in none of his Dakshiṇāmūrti forms seems to be accompanied by his consort. Hence our identification of this group as Tripurāntaka. Fig. 183

The striking thing about this group is its peculiar modelling. The treatment of Śiva is remarkably similar to that of the Tripurāntaka (Fig. 142) from Māyūram examined above. But here the stomach has become narrower. In the figure of Tripurasundarī the contraction of the stomach is so much that it does not at all seem to

exist. Apart from this, the treatment of the arms of both the figures is in the same peculiar style. The reason for this disproportionate treatment of these parts compared with the good proportions of other parts and the beautiful features of the face is not known. It must, however, be stated here that these bronzes do not seem to have lost any of their artistic qualities despite this defect. This is something noteworthy and does credit to the maker of this group who while emphasising a particular element of a form has carefully managed to prevent ugliness from entering into either the individual figures or the group. Let us now examine each figure briefly.

Śiva stands in the *dvi-bhaṅga* pose. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* on the head shows the pronged ornament prominently. The *Dātura* flower and the cobra are the other details which are clear. The *paṭṭa* is broad and worked. The face is round and its features are naturalistic; and the expression is serene. The right ear is empty and a simple *patra-kuṇḍala* adorns the left ear. Two *kaṇṭhīs* are seen on the neck. The lower one is broad and shows a series of pendants. The *yajñopavīta* is not quite distinct and its knot is seen in the middle of the chest. The *udara-bandha* is thick. The shoulders show the ornamented strand of hair on them as well as the pendants hanging, in front, on either side. The manner in which the arms are attached to the torso is almost similar to that seen in the Tripurāntaka from Mayūram (Fig. 142). The fore-arms are especially very slender and short. Pronged *keyūras* are seen on the arms and a set of three usual *valayas* is seen on each wrist. Elbow ornament of the beaded type, without the projecting bit is seen. *Paraśu* and deer are in the upper hands and the lower hands are in the *kaṭaka* pose.

The loin-cloth consists of short drawers and their borders get a slight emphasis. The waist-bands and the hanging median ends are interesting. Here the *simha-mukha* is not seen. The style of the legs is akin to that of Kaṇṇappanāyanār (Fig. 180) from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu.

The figure of Tripurasundarī has also quite a few interesting details. First of all, for the age of this group of bronzes, the height of this figure including its headdress is rather too much. The height of such images does not usually reach beyond the shoulder level of the male figures of the groups. The headdress of this figure is a *jaṭā-makuṭa* and it is somewhat similar to that of Pārvatī of the Kalyāṇasundara group (Fig. 140) from Tiruvel-vikkuḍi discussed above. The treatment of the face is superb. There are *makara-kuṇḍalas* in the ears but the heads of *makaras* are affixed to the shoulders which is rather peculiar. A very broad *kaṇṭhī*, a *māṅgalya-sūtra* and *channavīra* are seen on the torso. The breasts are full but not so beautiful. Shoulder ornaments are seen on both sides. The arms are similar in treatment to the arms of Śiva. But the elbow ornaments are interesting because of their big fan-shaped projecting bits. A series of bangles of the type

met with in the Pārvatī of the Kalyāṇasundara group (Fig 140) from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi is seen on each wrist. The garment reaches to the ankles and its end, seen between the legs, is shown frontally so that it almost covers the space between the legs. The festoons are wide and beautifully arranged. The other end of the garment tucked up at the left side of the waist is treated nicely. This figure too stands only in *dvi-bhaṅga* pose.

These figures stand on separate and incompletely worked circular *padmāsanas* which are moulded together with the *bhadrāsana* which is simple. There are the usual spikes on either side of it to receive the *prabhā*. Though small, this group is thus interesting as it exemplifies a mature local style which combines in itself elements of the folk style with those of highly refined one. This group has however been included here on account of the predominance of the qualities of the refined style of the period of Rājendra I, and it may be assigned to the beginning of the third quarter of the 11th century.

A group of Vishṇu and Bhūdevī only (Śrīdevī is missing) now in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai may, on grounds of style, considered at this place. Particularly interesting is the fact that the style of these images too is a mixed one which is similar to that of the above mentioned group. Fig. 184

The *kirīṭa* of Vishṇu has become high, conical and ornate and the band round the bottom of the *kirīṭa* is thick and ornate. The face is not quite well executed although its features are clear. Slight projection of the face is seen. The expression is one of wonder. A single broad *kaṇṭhī* is on the neck. The *yajñopavīta* is three-stranded. One of them is very short and the other two swing to right running almost parallel to the waist. From the point where they take a turn, starts a thread which goes under the garment and comes out again on the right leg just above the *pādasara*. The *udara-bandha* is flat and shows festoon decoration on it. The modelling of the torso is somewhat imperfect. A shoulder ornament of archaic type is seen in front on either side. Besides, the usual strands of hair with flowers are also seen on each shoulder. *Keyūras* with festoon are seen. Besides, there is the elbow ornament of the simpler type. The *śaṅkha* and *cakra* are also simple, and they are decorated with flames, the former with three and the latter with five. They are held between the first two fingers. Much store was set on these by some scholars. But their development being erratic they are given only so much attention as they deserve in our discussion which is based on not one or two isolated details alone, but on the whole gamut of them. The lower right hand which is in *abhaya* pose has a stalk-like thing on its palm. This is probably the stalk of the lotus. It may here be recalled the occurrence of a similar *motif* in the Madras Museum Vishṇu No. 2 (Fig. 25). The other hand holds the *gadā* which shows a number of bands on them and its style is quite more evolved than that of the *gadā* of the smaller Vishṇu from Paruttiyūr (Fig. 177).

The garment is depicted in an interesting manner. The folds are suggested by projecting grooved parallel lines. In between two of them floral and geometrical designs are seen. The border of the garment too is thick and unnaturally jutting out. The waist-band is ornamented and the *simha-mukha* clasp has become extremely unnatural. From its mouth hangs a narrow cylindrical loop which goes over a flat sash from which hang festoons and tassels. The characteristic chain with a knob in the middle is seen hanging down from the median loop. Besides, a pair of short tassels with pointed tips are seen on either thigh. The loops and bows are ornate, and one of the two ends is much shorter than the other.

The *padmāsana* on which the figure stands is quite beautiful and the petals are delineated in a realistic manner. Yet the importance given to the upper row is characteristic of the art of this period. As in early bronzes, the spikes are attached to this *āsana* itself.

Bhūdevī has a high *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* with a number of circular *karaṇḍas* arranged one over the other with comparatively little space between two of them. Its workmanship as well as that of the ornament is beautiful. The ears do not bear any ornaments. The treatment of the face is similar to that of Vishṇu, and this is particularly evident in such features as small mouth and short nose. The expression is, however, one of subdued joy. Three *kaṇṭhīs* and a *māṅgalya-sūtra* are seen on the neck. Neither *channavīra* nor *yajñopavīta* is seen. The torso is not quite well done. The lines of the sides show ugly curves. The breasts too have not been depicted in a competent manner. Both shoulders have the pendent ornaments which are in three strands. The other decoration is also there on them. The modelling of the arms is not good, and this is noticeable especially in the left arm of which the bend as well as proportions are quite below the mark. The decorative details of the arms are interesting. The *vāji-bandha* is quite prominent and its fan-wise projecting bit is noteworthy. It is seen on both arms. The bangle series on the wrists are useful for comparison with similar ones seen in the bronzes dealt with above. Here, however, at the head of the series is a *kaṅkaṇa* with a deeply protruding part in it.

The garment is in the same style as that of Vishṇu. At the waist, just below the navel, the usual cup-shaped depression has become much narrower here. Two broad sashes with shallow median loops are seen on the waist. Above them are two or more waist-cords, with a simple knot in front. From above this starts one end of the garment which is shown flowing on the right side. It has also the floral decorations on it. From the loops hangs the other end of the garment which has covered the space between the legs leaving not even so much space as is found in the Tripurasundarī figure discussed above. Above this flat end is seen a long chain with big links tipped by

a heart-like design. This is quite an interesting detail not met with in such a prominent way in figures of goddesses, examined above. Starting from the same point as the chain are triple-stranded tassels with knob-like tips seen beautifully curving on the thighs. A *nūpura*, beside a *pādasara*, is seen on each ankle. This is also noteworthy because in none of the female figures discussed above this detail was seen except in the *devī* figures of the Śrīnivāsa group (Fig. 99) from Sirupaṇaiyūr. In the bronzes belonging to subsequent periods the *nūpura* becomes an invariable item of decoration. Hence its significance. The *āsana* of this figure has not come down.

From the manner in which the modelling and decorative details of both the figures are worked, it is quite evident that the *sthapati* was imbued with the ideas of traditions of folk-art also, although he had not allowed them to ride over the traditions of the refined art. Coming as it does from Pudukkottai which had been a centre of activities of a school of art which had to its credit the magnificent sculptures and temples of Koḍumbāḷūr, and the murals of Sittaṇṇavāsal, this group of Vishṇu naturally shows strong local influence. But the fact that this was done during the time of Choḷa supremacy is also apparent from the style of a majority of details especially those of Vishṇu. They may be assigned to the same period as the above.

After this, the Chaṇḍikeśvara from Belūr requires to be taken up for study on account of its style. Already we have examined a bronze from the same place, namely the Vīṇādhara (Fig. 56). It was found to be an early figure. Here the modelling of the figure is characteristic of the period. The part comprising the shoulders and chest is comparatively broad and this, taken together with the narrower waist region, gives an impression that the torso is not quite proportionate as in the above discussed Vishṇu. Compared to other Chaṇḍikeśvaras here the headdress is significantly different. While in the other bronzes the headdresses are done quite in keeping with the modelling of the whole figure here it is comparatively elongated and does not seem to fit the head quite naturally. There is no third eye either. A strand of hair hangs on either shoulder in the place of the pendant and looped string met with in the other Chaṇḍikeśvaras. This is a general characteristic of the art of this period. These slight differences notwithstanding, it is a fine figure in other respects especially for the smooth lines and realistic facial features. The headdress is a *keśa-bandha* or *jaṭā-makuṭa* of which the top shows the ends of hair falling in two sets covering the top knot. The face is somewhat elongated and the eyes and nose are treated with understanding and skill. There are two necklets, *udara-bandha*, sacred thread, loin-cloth, three bands of sash, *nāga-valaya* type of armlets, a pair of wristlets and an anklet shown high up on each leg. Their workmanship is simple and the last mentioned detail is noteworthy as it is a characteristic of bronzes of this period. Elbow ornament with a simple projecting knot is also present here which is to be noted. While the previous Chaṇḍikeśvara is in *añjali* here the right hand is

Fig. 185

held up against the chest in the *mudrā* called *ardh-āñjali* and the left hand holds the axe. This novelty is a welcome one from the point of view of art. It is interesting from the point of view of iconography also because the variety of postures in which these figures are shown suggest that there did not exist any very definite injunctions or rules regarding the representation of this saint at this time.

The loin-cloth is simpler here than in the previous example. Its borders are indicated by lines and it is otherwise plain. But the hanging end of cloth seen between the legs is noteworthy. The workmanship of the axe is distinctly more evolved than that of the other Chaṇḍikeśvaras discussed above. The figure stands on a circular *āsana* (it is not clear whether it is a *padmāsana* or not) on a high square *bhadrāsana*. The mouldings of the latter *āsana* are also apparently developed.

The *Catalogue* has only two lines of description of this. The second line says: "A very simple image with slightly projecting elbow ornaments which clearly marks it as an image of Choḷa type" (*ibid.*, p. 130). And there this has been taken as the basis for the study of other Chaṇḍikeśvara figures. As has been said above, the features of this are certainly more developed than those of the bronzes discussed above. Hence this may be assigned to about the third quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 186 The bronze statue of a king [1] 64 *cm* high from Kandarakoṭṭai, Cuddalore Taluk, South Arcot District, may be said to be another example of this school. First of all its *kirīṭa* is strikingly similar to that of Rāma from Valarpuram (Fig. 171). Its necklaces and armlets are similar to those of the bronzes of this school dealt with above. The loin-cloth shows closely "wrinkled folds" and its edges are prominent. The *uttarīya* is tied with a graceful knot in front and a pair of pendent ends are seen on either side. The other interesting detail is the rosaries of beads held between the hands in *añjali* pose, the like of which has not been met with in earlier bronzes. That the bronze is of the school is borne out by the angular treatment of the elbows and by the presence of a thick anklet on the left leg. This latter ornament, as has been seen above, has become a distinguishing feature of a majority of images since Rājendra I's time. Its erect posture is in the style of Vishṇu bronzes; and the workmanship of the legs, which taper beautifully and are proportionate, adds charm to the posture.

The *padmāsana* of this bronze is of the usual type and the marginal lines of the petals are distinctly seen although their tips are not prominent. This *āsana* is seen on a simple square *bhadrāsana* which has on either side a pair of rings.

From the above description it will be seen that this is a good specimen of the art of bronzes of the school. As regards its identification Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan has said that it

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 133; T. G. Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, Fig. 19.

represented a local chief (*op. cit.*, p. 42) but the authors of the *Catalogue* have said that "it is presumably the Choḷa King Madhurāntaka, who is said by local tradition to have built the temple where it was found" (p. 138). They, however, opined that they had not been able to identify the king (p. 49). But now the situation is slightly better. It is known that the title of Madhurāntaka was borne by a number of Choḷa kings and princes, namely Parāntaka I,[1] Sundara Choḷa,[2] Rājendra I,[3] and Madhurāntaka, son of Vīrarājendra.[4] Of these, on grounds of style, this bronze cannot be said to belong to either of the former two kings. On the other hand, the style of the bronze, being characteristic of bronzes of the school of Rājendra I, and that the temple where it was found is said to have been built by a Madhurāntaka who may be either Rājendra I or Vīrarājendra's son this bronze may be said legitimately to represent one of them. Rājendra I was a great builder of temples and it was during his period, as during his father's, portraits in metal, of royal persons came to be made frequently and placed in temples as testified to by the bronze figure of Śoḷa-mā-devī discussed above. But this figure being in a slightly more evolved style, it may be a representation of Rājendra I made during his successor's time. According to us the school of Rājendra I extends upto about 1075 A.D. It may therefore be said that this bronze may have been done during the time of the prince called Madhurāntaka mentioned last, on the ground that as this prince was made the ruler of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam about 1065 A.D. by Vīrarājendra, the temple may have been built by him to which he presented the bronze in question. But in view of the fact that this person was not probably powerful on account of his not being really the son of Vīrarājendra as doubted by Prof. Sastri[5] it is likely that neither the bronze nor the temple was due to him, although they belong to this period; but a more satisfactory solution of this question will require further on-the-spot examination of the temple and of the other bronzes returned to the villagers.[6]

Another interesting bronze of about the same period is the seated eight-armed god- Fig. 187
dess, ht. with *prabhā*, 75 *cm*, called Mahishāsura-mardanī by the authors of the *Catalogue* (p. 121) from Turaikkāḍu, Tanjore District. In view of the fact that the demon shown on the pedastal is not buffalo-headed, he may be taken as the other demon Niśumbha who was also destroyed by the goddess. If this is so, then this image may be taken to represent Niśumbhasūdanī as well. This is however a minor point so far as the bronze is concerned. The real importance of this bronze lies in the fact that though it shows an eight-armed figure, there is no faltering present in the portraiture of the arms. On the

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Coḷas*, (1955), p. 122.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 145.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp, 202, 206.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
[6] *Catalogue*, p. 49.

contrary the manner of depiction of these arms has made the authors of the *Catalogue* say that it is an "image portraying considerable vigour" (p. 121). They have also given as usual a succinct description of this bronze on p. 121 of the *Catalogue* and they say in regard to its chronological position that it is "probably belonging or closely allied to the group of images of Chola type." We would like however to say that on grounds of style, it may be assigned to the middle or end of the third quarter of the 11th century A.D.

The most noteworthy details of this remarkable figure are its realistically done circular *keśa-bhāra*, the marvellous manner of showing the disposition of the arms on either side, the full and realistically depicted breasts with a *nāga-kuca-bandha* above them, the fine modelling of the limbs and the torso, the highly appropriate gestures of hands and postures of the legs, the restrained decorative embellishments and above all the *raudra-cum-saumya* expression. The broad *prabhā* with perforated pattern and six festoons hanging from the bottom of its apex and fringed with seventeen flames, all three-tongued except the one at the apex which is five-tongued, is an interesting one as an embellishment for the bronze and is also important as it serves as a significant piece of evidence for the date of the bronze.

Fig. 188 The bronze representing Śiva alone of the Kalyāṇasundara[1] group from Tiruvottiyūr near Madras, shows features which necessitate its examination next. A glance at it gives one an impression that it is a remarkable specimen and ancient too. This is due to its fine proportions, restrained decoration and beautiful stance.

In spite of these qualities, the manner in which the limbs are modelled, with stress and emphasis on angular features, such as is evident from the unnatural projection of the forearms and of the upper arms from the elbows, the stiffness of the fingers, the ornate *paraśu* and the large number of sashes shown in an indistinguishable way round the waist. All these characteristics will be found to be significantly at variance with the ones of the Kalyāṇasundara from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi (Fig. 140) examined above and much more so from those of a similar group (Fig. 120) from Tiruveṇkāḍu. The *padmāsana* is worked well. On grounds of style, it may be assigned to the end of the school of Rājendra I.

The bronze representing the *devī* of this group is apparently very ornate and does not therefore seem to be the original figure that went with the Śiva.

The foregoing examination of the bronzes attributed to the school of Rājendra I, shows unmistakably several significant points bearing on the progress of the art of bronzes during the greater part of the 11th century A.D. While maintaining the level of excellence of the school of Rājarāja I, this school has also contributed quite a few new details

[1] C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical.....Iconography*, Pl. XXX, Fig. B.

not met with in the specimens of bronzes of earlier periods, but which became an invariable feature of bronzes of the subsequent periods. The most noteworthy detail of this kind is the depiction of *Gaṅgā* on the *jaṭās* of Naṭeśa images. Amongst others, mention may be made of the tier-wise arrangement of curls of hair of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* of such bronzes as representing Chaṇḍikeśvara and Rājamannār or Kṛishṇa and the introduction of *nūpuras* besides *pādasaras*, even in the male figures.

A remarkable contribution made by this school is making of portraits of royal persons or persons of noble descent. The practice of making images of saints and seers seems to have become more popular during this period.

The existence of bronzes representing not only gods and goddesses of Vaishṇavism and Śaivism but also of Buddhism is proof positive for the fact that royal patronage was extended to all the religions. But even here the majority of the examples being Śaivite images, there is little doubt that it was Śaivism that received greater encouragement than the other religions. The excellent bronze seated Buddha from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam (Fig. 179) and the Rāma from Sundaraperumāḷ-kovil (Fig. 171) show, however, that in so far as the style of art was concerned the *sthapatis* of these bronzes were following the same traditions as the *sthapatis* who produced the Kalyāṇasundara (Fig. 140) from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi or the Naṭeśa from Tiruvāḷaṅgāḍu (Fig. 164).

Several images of this school are large and solid and this brings out the fact that the prosperity ushered in during the time of Rājarāja I was continued unabated during his son's time also. Moreover the existence of bronzes in such far off places as Tiruvottiyūr in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, Belūr in Salem District and Kālahasti in Chittoor District indicates that the prosperity was widespread so that the arts and crafts flourished all over the country.

A word about the style of the bronzes of this school may be said here. While the previous school has evolved more or less a uniform style, a few regional varieties of this school are apparent, as exemplified by the Tripurāntaka group from Iḍumbāvaṇam and the Vishṇu group from Pudukkottai. Whether these influenced the semi-folk and folk styles, examples of which will be dealt with below, cannot be said. Anyway the traditions of the folk style seem to have had some connection or other with the regional styles of Rājendra I's school.

This brings to a close the examination of the development of the art of bronzes during the early Choḷa period which, according to us starts from about 910 A.D. and ends about 1075 A.D. It would have become clear by now that the art reached the zenith of its development during the first half of this period and it was successfully maintained during the second half. This was evident not only from the technical excellence

and artistic qualities of the various examples but also from the variety of themes chosen for depiction. Some of the themes, as for instance Rāma group and Naṭeśa, were perfected during this period and they remained ever since as models for works of their kind produced during subsequent periods. It was during this period such novel themes as the Nāyanmārs and royal persons came to be represented through the art of bronzes also, a practice which was continued vigorously in the subsequent periods. In regard to the details of individual items, a progressive elaboration of them could be discerned which is especially noticeable in the examples of the last phase of this period. It paved the way for the gradual deterioration of the aesthetic qualities of the art. On the whole, however, among the bronzes that may be attributed to this period a great majority are undoubtedly great masterpieces of which quite a number can be said to rank with the best examples of sculpture belonging to any country of any period in the world. The Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 164), the Rāmas from Paruttiyūr (Fig. 90) and Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr (Fig. 96), the Vṛishabhavāhana (Fig. 128) from Tiruveṇkāḍu and the Hālāhala Lokeśvara (Fig. 102) from Kadri are amongst them. Never before or after this period was achieved in this field of creative activity an eminence of this kind characterised by originality of conception and brilliance of execution. The credit for this, no doubt, goes to the people of the period who extended a warm reception to men of genius and original ideas, but it is not a little due to their leaders namely the kings of the period amongst whom the three most important were Vīranārāyaṇa Madiraikoṇḍa Parāntaka, Śivapādaśekhara Aruḷmoḷivarman Rājarāja and Paṇḍitavatsala Gaṅgaikoṇḍa Rājendra. When we speak of these great men of action as contibuting greatly to the promotion of this art, it goes without saying that their actions were as a rule based on the advices of the great men of thought and spiritual eminence such as Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, Karuvūr Devar and Nāthamuni. It may be mentioned, in passing, that the distinction achieved by the noble men of this period in this field may be taken to serve as a measure for the evaluation of the progress achieved by the people in other walks of life too.

BRONZES OF LATER CHOḶA PERIOD

The examples of the art to be examined below belong to the period from about the last quarter of the 11th century A.D. till about the end of the 13th century. It commences with the rule of Kulottuṅga Choḷa I and ends with that of Rājendra III whose rule came to a close about A.D. 1279. Though this king and his predecessor were weak and their rule was very much circumscribed by the power especially of the Pāṇḍyas who were nearly supreme in South India during almost the whole of the 13th century A.D. with the exception of the first two decades of the century upto which the rule of Kulottuṅga Choḷa III extended, yet the traditions of art and crafts of the whole of Tamil-nāḍ as well as the northern part of Ceylon were more or less the same till about the

end of the century. Hence for the sake of convenience we call the whole period as later Choḷa.

Although there was gradual decline of power of the ruling dynasty, so far as the cultural matters were concerned, the pace of progress set during the early Choḷa period was maintained. This was again due to the combined efforts of both the rulers and their advisers. If there were great *ācāryas* like Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi and great Siddhas like Karuvūr Devar to guide the king like Rājarāja I, there were the great teachers like Rāmānujācārya and Śekkiḷār, and inspired poets like Kambaṉ and Oṭṭakkūttaṉ to give counsel to the kings of the later Choḷa period. Owing to the fact that the *ācāryas* and the poets revelled in the exposition of the various religions and that the art and crafts too were as usual devoted to the religious purposes, most of the examples of the art of bronzes are also religious in character. It is known that the *ācāryas* and other leaders of thought of this period introduced quite a few new theories in their exposition of the tenets and principles of the different forms of Hinduism. Consequently, the arts of this period began to make use of these new themes not met with in earlier periods or introduced some significant detail to an image of a deity which was not found in such images of earlier periods. Owing to the increased religious activities and the building of a large number of temples, the production of metal images also increased in leaps and bounds. While they made innumerable bronzes, the *sthapatis* of the period naturally became great adepts in the technique of this art, which is clearly exemplified by the bronzes. When emphasis was laid on number, size and technique, the quality of the products naturally declined, as will be seen in the examples of bronzes to be dealt with below. However, the existence of quite a number of fine specimens belonging to this period shows the unbroken continuance of the ancient traditions of art.

In view of the fact that during this period were produced innumerable bronzes of which only a small number is dealt with here, it is considered safe not to classify them king or school-wise as has been done in the case of the bronzes of the early Choḷa period; but it is proposed to study them in a general way assigning, on the basis mostly of style, each or a group of them to a period to which they might have belonged, as has been done above.

One of the earliest examples of the later Choḷa period is the Somāskanda, ht. 50 *cm* **Fig. 189** from Nīḍūr,[1] Tanjore District. Its antiquity has been well recognised by the authors of the *Catalogue*: They say: "The treatment of this image, especially the necklaces and faces, clearly mark it as of Choḷa type, in spite of the absence of the projecting elbow ornament." It must be stated that this ornament, though present in a number of bronzes examined above, do not seem to have been an invariable feature. Several

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 106.

bronzes, especially of male figures which we have discussed, are without it as in many others it is shown only as an insignificant band round the elbow. It is to be mentioned here that in an Umāsahita group though this ornament is absent in the Śiva figure, it is present in the Umā figure. It is interesting to note that good many specimens of the art of this period representing groups like this are characterised by this feature. Regarding the date of this group, the manner of their referring to it as "clearly of Chola type" unmistakably suggests the idea of the authors of the *Catalogue* that this is to be assigned to the early Chola times. If they have adopted Jouveau Dubreuil's classification then the early Chola period lies between 850 and 1100 A.D. If the bronze in question is assigned to the last phase of this period, this attribution does not seem to be wide off the mark; because, our independent enquiry, has also led to the same conclusion although according to us, from the last quarter of the 11th century begins the later Chola period.

This bronze is apparently beautifully treated. But such minor details as the *makuṭas* of both Śiva and Umā, the elaborate necklaces, the angularities of the torso of Umā and the somewhat less well worked *padmāsanas* give one the impression that it is somewhat later than this period. No doubt, there are characteristics of images of the middle and late later Chola periods, as will be seen below. But their occurrence in this group suggests that these details have their beginnings here, because it is easily seen from the other details as well as from the exquisite finish of each of the figures of this group that the images have more things in common with the specimens of the school of Rājendra I than with the bronzes of the later periods. Let us now describe the bronze.

Śiva is seated on a *padmāsana* in the erect *sukhāsana* posture. The manner in which the *jaṭā-makuṭa* is worked is pleasing but the details of it are not in bold relief. The face is square and its features are clear. The expression reveals a subtle smile. There is a short *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear and a *makara-kuṇḍala* in the right ear. The necklaces are interesting of which the lower-most is prominent, a feature which characterises a great majority of the bronzes to be dealt with below. The *yajñopavīta* shows only two strands. The bigger strand is ribbon-like and is shown flowing in a beautiful wave form. The *udara-bandha* is thick and gem-set in front. The torso is executed in a classical manner. The shoulders are beautifully modelled. Only on the right side a small pendent tassel is seen. The strand of hair with flowers in them, which fall on either side now, hang very low although their style is simple.

Despite its probable chronological position after that of the Kalyāṇasundara (Fig. 188) from Tiruvottiyūr, the treatment of the arms and the technique of joining the upper arms of this bronze are superior to those of the former. This is mainly due to

the fact that it comes from the heart of the Choḷa kingdom. Their modelling is fine and their postures are beautiful and balanced. The fingers are worked in the characteristic early Choḷa manner. The emblems, too, though they are much developed in style, are done in a pleasing manner. *Keyūras* and *valayas* of the usual type are seen on the arms.

The above mentioned remarks can be applied equally to the part below the waist also, although the region about the hips is not given prominence. There is only a loin-cloth and it is simple. The sashes are also simple but the *simha-mukha* is elaborately worked. Besides, tassels are seen on the thighs. The legs are exquisitely worked and the hanging leg is especially noteworthy. It is interesting to note that even in this instance no anklets are seen. But as usual the *pādasaras* are present.

The figure of Umā is, of course, in the same style as that of Śiva, and its workmanship is charming. The details which distinguish this figure from similar *devīs* are the following. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is prominent and its finial is very pronounced. Its form is however graceful. The strands of hair falling on either side of the shoulders reach almost the bands of the *keyūras* which show broad festoons. There are the elbow ornaments but they do not show the projection. Among the necklaces is the ring-like one enclosing the rest. Only a simple tassel is seen hanging from the right shoulder. The torso is proportionate but it is its modelling that throws light on the chronological position of this group. The lines of the sides of the torso of the figures of female deities examined above, have already become straight and stiff. In this figure this feature is particularly emphasised. The workmanship of the breasts is to be noted. It is realistically delineated. It must be mentioned here the fact that in some of the female figures of the subsequent periods, this part is poorly worked. The postures of the legs are beautiful but that they are much developed from those of the Sorakkuḍi Somāskanda (Fig. 86) and the Somāskanda from Śivapuram (Fig. 92) can be easily seen. The treatment of the garment also supports this.

Turning to the figure of baby Skanda, we see in it the beauty of modelling, the perfection of proportions aud the tenderness of feeling, in all their glory. He is shown in front of the other figures. This is the first instance where the mastery of the ancient *sthapatis* in representing babies is brought out in a telling manner. The qualities of this tiny little figure are enhanced by the splendid style in which the ornaments such as the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the *toḍus* (ear-rings), the necklaces, the *channavīra*, the waist-bands with a tassel hanging from them on either thigh and the *pādasaras* are depicted. The right hand is in *kaṭaka* pose and the left is in *varada* pose. In some of the Somāskanda bronzes, the figure of Skanda is shown behind in which case it is not clearly seen.

The Śiva and Umā figures are seated each on a separate *padmāsana* the petals of which are in a style in which are a great majority of the *padmāsanas* of bronzes belonging to subsequent periods are done. In some of the bronzes examined above the *padmāsanas* of this style are seen. This fact shows that the *sthapatis* of the 11th century A.D. had not been consistent in working this detail. In the present instance it is the low relief of the petals as well as their distinctive marginal lines that are to be noted. The Skanda figure stands on a plain circular plate. The *padmāsanas* are placed over a *bhadrāsana* of fine proportions and simple mouldings.

Thus the entire group is undoubtedly a noteworthy specimen of the art of bronzes. From its style it may be assigned to the last quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 190 The bronze representing Jambhala from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam[1] may be said to belong to this period on grounds of style. Its height is 10·5 *cm.*

The Buddhist deity Jambhala is the equivalent of Hindu Kubera. Here he is seated on a *padmāsana*. He is shown almost as a dwarf with a pot-belly and with short and fat limbs. But the treatment of the figure is obviously in the classical style with some of the details highly developed. He wears a short *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* which is decorated with angular ornaments on its sides. The *paṭṭa* is smaller yet it shows the festoon patterns. The face is plumpy with a tendency to bulge out in front. The eyes and eye-brows are shown by incised lines. The other details are beautifully moulded. The expression suggests self-satisfaction. Exquisitely worked *makara-kuṇḍalas* in the ears and *kaṇṭhīs* in the neck are seen. The *yajñopavīta* is broad and seems to be beaded. It does not show any knot on the left chest. The manner in which its flow is suggested is not quite natural and this feature gives a clue for the date of the piece. The *udara-bandha* is broad and gem-set. It is also the longest we have come across as it has to go round the pot-belly of the figure.

The torso is exceedingly well moulded, quite in keeping with the dwarfish character of the deity. The naturalistic treatment of the nipples is noteworthy. The shoulders are not heavy. On either shoulder fall the flower-decorated strand of hair. A tiny tassel is all that is seen hanging from the right shoulder in front. Highly ornate *keyūras* on the arms and gem-set *valayas* on the wrists are seen. The modelling of the arms is characteristic of the period. The fingers are, however, treated with tenderness and feeling. A citron is held in the right hand, while a mongoose of beautiful workmanship is held in the left hand. The mongoose is kept on the left lap. It " is supposed to be receptacle of all gems and jewels so that when pressed by Jambhala it vomits forth riches which are collected in bags of money. One such

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes*, Pl. X, Fig. 1.

bag which it had vomitted or disgorged is being kicked by the left foot of Jambhala for his devotee to take." [1]

The legs too are treated skilfully, especially with an eye on the postures. *Pādasaras* set with gems are seen on the feet. On the whole the modelling is fine and the decorative details are worked in a praiseworthy manner. It is the treatment of the *padmāsana* which is peculiar not only in this bronze but in a great majority of bronzes from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam which causes doubts in regard to their antiquity. But we have said in several places above, that a single detail should not be taken as the criterion for dating the bronzes, especially when it occurs in bronzes of classical workmanship like the Jambhala under discussion. In such cases, details of this kind which are contemporary with the main figure, may have to be taken as suggesting the fact that they are the products of a distinctive school. In this instance the petals of the two rows are shown by means of deep incisions along their margins as well as along their edges and they are not at all in relief. This peculiarity is seen in some of the later bronzes also. But in some others another variety of this detail marked by thick petals shown in high relief is also seen, a feature indicating clearly the coming into being of several local schools each having its own traditions of art with special reference to the treatment of such minor details as the petals of *padmāsana*. A number of early bronzes with *padmāsanas* of uncertain styles have already been noticed above including the Jaṭāmakuṭa Lokeśvara (Fig. 146) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam. From the style of the details, the bronze under discussion may be assigned to the last quarter of the 11th century A.D. rather than to the "early Choḷa period."

The Avalokiteśvara [2], ht. 14.7 *cm*, from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam may be examined now. It is Fig. 191
obviously in the same style as the Jambhala figure. Here, the figure stands in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose, on a *padmāsana*. The *āsana* is very much like the *āsana* of the above figure. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is characteristically simple and is composed of thin circles put one over the other. There is the pronged ornament in front. The *paṭṭa* is a fine specimen of its kind as it is made of flowers. The flower in the middle is very prominent. The face is oval and slightly protruding. The eyes and eye-brows are shown by incised grooves. But the nose and lips are realistically worked. *Patra-kuṇḍalas* with wide space adorn the ears. The expression suggests amazement and *ūrṇā* or forehead mark is present.

The neck is short, and the *kaṇṭhis* are prominent. The torso retains some of the good points of the torso of a classical bronze of this kind. *Yajñopavīta* is absent, but a broad gem-set *udara-bandha* is seen. Shoulders are drooping and the shoulder ornament

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 54.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 48, Pl. VII, Fig. 2.

is seen on the left side instead of on the right side. Just as in the Jambhala noticed above, in this figure also, the strands of hair falling on either side of the shoulder are decked with full-blown flowers.

Coming to the arms of which this figure has four, their modelling leaves much to be desired. They are short, too short to be proportionate. Nevertheless their disposition and the poses of the hands are done in the traditional manner. It must also be stated that the workmanship of the fingers is very poor. Of course it seems to be an invariable feature of almost all the Buddhist bronzes from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam except for the biggest of them examined above. Simple armlets and *valayas* are seen; upper right hand holds a rosary of beads, the upper left a blue lotus, the lower right is in *vyākhyāna* or *vitarka-mudrā* and the lower left is in *varada* pose.

The modelling of the legs is fine in spite of a slight tendency towards heaviness which is apparent in the thighs. The lines and masses are depicted with consummate skill. Their beauty is enhanced by the sparce but effectively designed loin-cloth and the waist-band. The presence of the cloth is indicated cleverly by a few significant lines on the thighs. The waist-bands bearing a *simha-mukha* design of ornate workmanship are in low relief. The noteworthy feature of this detail is the pair of tassel-like ends hanging on either thigh. Unlike several bronzes representing a deity of this type, the piece of cloth seen between the tassels is not long and it is simple. Only *pādasaras* are seen on the feet.

In general this piece is one of the important specimens of the art as obtained towards the closing years of the 11th century A.D.

The Pārvati[1] said to come from the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram has features which suggest that its date is not far removed from that of the above bronze. This figure stands in the charming *dvi-bhaṅga* pose. At a glance the salient qualities of it will be apparent. They consist of the beautiful but sharply tapering *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the face with a smiling countenance, the torso showing attenuated stomach, the simple arm ornaments including the characteristic elbow ornament with a small projecting bit, the close-fitting garment with its folds suggested by incised line running parallel to each other, the hem of the garment on the left leg being shown as near the knee-cap as possible, the hanging end of garment seen between the legs being treated in a realistic manner, the ornate waist-bands with tassels and festoons which are small and the tucked-up end seen hanging from the waist on the right thigh. Besides, the necklaces including the outer-most ring and the *channavīra* are characteristic of bronzes of the period. The shoulder ornament does not seem to be present. The chain-like design

[1] O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. XXXI.

depicted as hanging from the middle of the waist-band is noteworthy. Above all, the modelling of the bronze which is rather heavy, is one of the important qualities of the bronzes of this period. Though the poses of the hands are treated in a charming manner and the fingers are supple and tender, yet the manner in which the left arm is worked is not pleasing. This is however compensated for to a great extent by the good modelling, the characteristic flexions and the beautiful proportions of the legs. *Pādasaras* are seen on the feet.

The bronze representing Chandraśekhara[1] from Okkūr may be taken up next for examination. It is a small figure measuring only 38 *cm* high including the *prabhā*. In spite of its small size, this bronze shows details which are characteristic of bronzes of this period. Fig. 192

The *jaṭā-makuṭa* as is usual in similar figures of this period, is not very clear and its details are not prominent. Further a tendency for elongation is evident. The face is treated with skill. Its features are somewhat realistic. But there is a slight indication of projection of it. A big *patra-kuṇḍala* is seen in the left ear and an insignificant *makara-kuṇḍala* in the right ear. Necklaces including the lower-most one are noteworthy. The single-stranded *yajñopavīta* and *udara-bandha* are simple. A thick tassel is seen only on the right shoulder. Interestingly the strand of hair falling on either side of the shoulders is treated in a naturalistic manner. Though the arms are not treated in a praiseworthy manner, the emblems, especially the *paraśu*, are depicted again realistically which shows that the *sthapati* who did the figure was of no mean ability. The fingers are however not clearly indicated.

Regarding the part below the waist, the legs are proportionate, slender and beautiful. On account of the erect posture these qualities cannot be appreciated fully. The loin-cloth of this figure is interesting. As in the Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 191) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam examined above, here also it is indicated only by an incised line on either thigh. The girdles are gem-set and there are two of them. The *uttarīya* is tied round the waist in a broad sash-like manner with a shallow median loop from below which hangs between the legs a big tassel flanked by a beaded tassel curving out on either side. A more developed example of this interesting detail will be seen in the Chandraśekara now in the Musee Guimet to be dealt with below. The hanging ends of the *uttarīya* and the bows on either side are also interesting. Though the parallel lines incised on them seem to show markedly the tendency to stylise, yet the treatment of the bows is again full of realism. Anklets are absent from the legs.

Coming to the pedestals, the *padmāsana* on which the figure stands has apparently reached a stage when its petals are not separately shown but are indicated only by grooved

[1] *Catalogue*, 101.

lines. But the manner in which this has been done coupled with the simplicity of workmanship of the *bhadrāsana* and of the *prabhāvaḷī* makes it look contemporary with the figure, because once it is removed from its context and viewed separately it will be a puzzle even to the most experienced person in the field. The *prabhāvaḷī* is all the more interesting. It is flat with its basal portions flatter and carved with floral designs. The carving of the designs is continued right round the entire flat portion of the arch with a prominent pattern at the top-most part of it from which also projects down a short pointed design. Between this flat part and an outer slender line-like part is a series of flattened balls, a feature which has an interesting further history as is seen in a number of bronzes belonging to later periods. At the apex of the arch is a five-tongued flame, the tongues being done in a beautiful manner. Interestingly the thick middle part of this flame seems to have been worked into something resembling a face, which is an innovation due to the pure and simple imagination of the *sthapati*. As usual a series of flames is seen on either side of this top-most flame. There are fourteen of them on the proper right and sixteen of them on the proper left, which together with the top-most flame make a total of thirty-one flames, a large number, which is a characteristic of *prabhās* of this period as well as subsequent periods. An interesting thing about the flames on the sides is that unlike those of the *prabhās* examined above, here each of them is only single-tongued and the tongue is worked in a charming wavy form.

Thus the bronze may be seen to be a good specimen of the art and it may be assigned to about the last few years of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 193 The bronze Pārvatī from the same place[1] "either belongs or to show close affinity to this type"[2] say the authors of the *Catalogue*, which seems to be borne out by the stage of development of each its details.

Pārvatī stands on a *padmāsana*, which is not at all clear, over a *bhadrāsana*, in a slightly greater flexion than the Pārvatī from Kāñchīpuram mentioned above. In other details too this is apparently more evolved than the latter. The *keśa-bandha* is narrow and conical with the *keyūra*-like ornament in front. *Makara-kuṇḍalas* are seen in the ears. The face is oval and its features are not particularly good. A broad necklet is seen on the neck. A cord is seen closely tied to it, which may be intended to be a *tāli*. The *channavīra* of this bronze is slightly ornate; for, instead of a single knot in the middle of the chest, two knots are seen; and moreover a thread is seen pendent from the lower knote. The torso is not so beautiful as that of the Pārvatī from Kāñchī, owing to the deep bend on the right side, the narrow chest and of the less well modelled breasts. As has been said above the deterioration in the modelling of the breasts has begun apparently from now on.

[1] *Catalogue* Pl. XXI, Fig. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

Here a strand of hair is seen on either shoulder. The above mentioned deficiency is, however, compensated for by the splendid lines of the left side and of the legs as well as by the beautiful flexion of the left arm. The *keyūras* of the arms are simple, but the most interesting detail of this figure is the elbow ornament which has a prominent projection in the form of a fan. The arms are proportionate and their postures realistic. The gentle sway of the left arm lends charm to the whole figure. The hips are not comparatively heavy unlike the female figures of earlier periods but the legs gracefully taper towards the feet. The bend of the line of the right side from the stomach to the ankle is exquisite. The knee-caps are clearly seen and the part about the left knee seems to be contracted a little more than is usually seen in female figures. This does not seem to be a happy innovation. On the feet are *pādasaras*. The garment is interesting because unlike that of the Kāñchī Pārvatī, the folds are suggested by the pattern of waves shown close to each other. The tip of one end of the garment which is attached to the right leg, is seen joining the ankle of the left leg. The two ends of the *uttarīya* which is wound round the waist are seen hanging one on each thigh. The tips are shown in a zig-zag fashion which is simple and beautiful. The two sashes are broad and they have a simple knot with a suggestion of a small loop below. This bronze may be said to take the traditions met with in the Kāñchī Pārvatī a step further.

The bronze representing Pārvatī[1], height 32 *cm*, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A., may be taken up next. In it are seen one or two details based on more ancient traditions. They are the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* and the beautiful wave-over-wave pattern of the garment. The face is also full of divine splendour which is a characteristic of classical bronzes. The other details such as the slender modelling of the torso, the elaborately worked necklaces, the armlet which has become a mere design and the poorly executed fingers are undoubtedly characteristic of the bronzes of the period as has been seen above. Nevertheless the manner in which the figure is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose and the proportions of the limbs, especially of the legs, are of a high order of workmanship. Besides, there are a single slender tassel forming the shoulder ornament on the left side and a strand of curly hair falling in a graceful manner on either side of the shoulders. There are *pādasaras* on the feet. In a few bronzes showing female deities the garment covering the left leg is depicted falling not below the knee-cap. Here this feature is seen in the right leg and the hem of the garment is well above the knee-cap. In front of the right foot there is the tip of the tassel hanging from the waist-band which is simple save for the gem-set decoration occurring in its middle part. This bronze is obviously one of the typical specimens of the art of the early phase of the later Choḷa period and it may be assigned to the beginning of the 12th century A.D. The 11th-12th century date given to it in *The Art of India and Pakistan* is a cautious one.

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 73, Pl. 53, No. 313.

Fig. 194 The figure of a goddess (provenance not known) now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London seems to be akin to the above Pārvatī. The modelling is somewhat plumpy; the presence of the prominent *vājī-bandha* and the manner of depicting the lower garment are noteworthy. As the figure holds a lily in the right hand and wears a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* it may represent Bhūdevī and so, it might have belonged to a Vishṇu group of which the other two figures are missing. Its *bhaṅga* is beautiful and facial features are pleasing. Curiously the sashes with loops and tassels are absent here but the manner of tucking up the ends of cloth and of showing the flowing ends and bows on the sides is interesting. Besides the *keyūras*, there is another band on the arms which is rather peculiar to this figure. This figure shows the *māṅgalya-sūtra*. The pedestal consists of two parts namely *bhadrāsana* surmounted by *padmāsana*; the former is worked well while the details of the latter are not worked. This bronze may also be assinged to about the same date as the above.

Fig. 195 Śivakāmasundarī from Tiruvāymūr, Tanjore District is apparently similar to the above Bhūdevī in feeling though in the depiction of details, as well as in the very modelling there is considerable difference between these two figures. Among the interesting details of this image, the tapering *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the *channavīra*, the *keyūra* with small tassels hanging from its bottom, the elbow ornament without the projecting piece, the sash with narrow loop and beautiful tassels and the diaphanous garment are noteworthy The *māṅgalya-sūtra* is of especial interest. The *bhaṅga* of this figure is greater but the manner of modelling the knees, for the matter of that, the modelling of the legs, is definitely crude. The part above the waist is beautifully worked. The features of the face are also exceedingly well executed. Unlike the *padmāsana* of the above figure, here the *āsana* is worked in detail and the workmanship of the petals is not only clear-cut but also realistic. This piece may be dated to a period slightly later than that of the above.

Fig. 196 The figure of Naṭeśa from Tiruppanandāḷ, Tanjore District may be said to be one of the examples of the early 12th century A.D. Its details are as follows :—

The headdress, when compared with that of the Naṭeśa from Puñjai (Fig. 169), shows two tiers of the feathers while in the latter and in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa there is only one tier. Here a prominent disc-like ornament is seen. The emblems are not distinct. But the fillet decorated with festoons is prominent. The face is square and its features are clearly delineated. No ornament is seen in the right ear while the left ear shows a small *patra-kuṇḍala*. Besides, the tops of the ears show rings. The treatment of the *jaṭās* is interesting. Five whirling locks of simple workmanship are seen on either side. They are interlinked by three vertical threads. Flower designs on them disclose that they are embellished. The waves of the locks are beautifully depicted and

their ends are curved slightly. The conception of the whole design is beautiful and its execution is effortless; and the gentle movement of the locks effectively highlights the charming rhythm of the dance of Śiva.

On the topmost lock of hair is an elliptical design enclosing a creeper-like pattern. Usually a similar design is shown on the other side also, but here it is not found. The most interesting detail seen on the same lock of hair is the figure of a mermaid representing *Gaṅgā*. Its first occurrence has been noticed in the Naṭeśa from Puñjai (Fig. 169) although here it is very tiny. This may be taken to suggest that even here the *sthapati* not being so bold as his later-day compatriots were, seems to have proceeded slowly.

Among other interesting details of this bronze are the additional ring-like necklace besides the two usual ones, the broad shoulder ornament on the right side, the three-banded *nāga-valaya* type of *keyūras* with wide space between the bands, beaded elbow ornaments with the projecting bits seen at least in the upper left arm, four *valayas* on the wrists of left arms instead of the usual three, sash with wide loop on the waist, the absence of the flowing ends of the *uttarīya* usually shown wound round the stomach and flame of fire in a small receptacle held in the upper left hand. The last detail is noteworthy because holding of a receptacle with fire is an ancient tradition which seems to linger on and it shows that the *sthapati* was of the old school.

The modelling of the bronze shows some interesting points. The limbs and trunk are obviously proportionate and the manner in which the lifted up left leg is thrown into the air is highly suggestive of the dynamic movement of the figure. The treatment of the lower left arm is good, but that of the upper left arm is not good as is evident from the irregular lines which frame its mass and the somewhat bulky appearance of the elbow. A similar discrepancy is evident in the manner in which the right leg is worked. That the *sthapati* was a little over-zealous about curves, is known from the deep curve of the line of the left side of the torso but unfortunately it is overdone and has caused a slight distortion in the modelling of the torso. The bronze is otherwise a fine specimen of the art of the period.

The style of the *prabhāvaḷī* too is evedently traditional. That this is more evolved than the *prabhāvaḷī* of the Puñjai and Tanjore Naṭeśas is evident from the nearly circular shape it has assumed. But the way in which its ends are attached to the *padmāsana* clearly indicates that the *sthapati* had not yet become familiar with the idea of showing the *prabhā* as a correct circle. The tubular form of this is noteworthy, because in the above mentioned Naṭeśas this part of the *prabhā* is flat and in the Naṭeśa from Tanjore it has been shown with a series of small perforations between the fringe with flames and the thicker inner side. But this *prabhā* is not without its precursors. We have seen above, that the *prabhā* of the famous Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa is in this style and

going still further back, the *prabhā* of the Śivapuram Naṭeśa is also in this style. Moreover, quite a number of Naṭeśas belonging to subsequent periods have *prabhās* of this type. This shows that the *prabhās* of images, especially of Naṭeśa, were done in two different ways. Coming to the flames, there are twenty-three of them, eleven on either side of the flame at the crest of the *prabhā*. Except the topmost flame which has five tongues, the rest are shown with only three tongues, which is another piece of evidence for the continuance of earlier traditions. The treatment of the flames in some respects is simpler than that of the flames of the *prabhā* of Puñjai Naṭeśa. This single piece of evidence should not, however, be taken as the basis for assigning this bronze to a period earlier than the other Naṭeśa, because a majority of other details, as mentioned above, point definitely to a date somewhere about the first quarter of the 12th century A.D.

The items which remain to be noticed are the Apaṣmāra Purusha and the *padmāsana*. The former is small but is of the type of the dwarf seen in the Puñjai Naṭeśa except for the face. The *padmāsana* is noteworthy because its lower row of petals is done with a bulging out at the bottom of the petals, which gives the impression that this part is like an inverted bowl. The workmanship of the petals is characteristic of similar designs of the period, and this is evident from their subdued treatment. Thus it is clear that this bronze is not only a fine specimen of the art but also a significant specimen at that.

A few interesting Buddhist bronzes from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam seem to belong to this period. Amongst them may be mentioned two Shaḍakshari Lokeśvaras illustrated on Plate IX, Figs. 3 and 4, the Avalokiteśvara shown on Plate VII, Fig. 3 and the Tārā of Plate XI, Fig. 3 of the *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum* by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran.

Fig. 197 The description of the first Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara, height 14·7 *cm*, is contained on p. 50 of the above book.

It is however necessary to mention here the fact that when compared with the bronzes to be examined presently this bronze is obviously singular in style, and its decorative details are full of interest. In fact amongst the numerous bronzes belonging to the Nāgapaṭṭiṇam hoard, there is no other piece which is similar in every respect to this. It may be assigned to the end of the first quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 198 The second Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara,[1] height 9·2 *cm*, is apparently a product of a *sthapati* different from the one who made the previous figure. It is easy to know that there is at least a difference of a few years between them; but it must be said that the present bronze, in style and decorative details, is more or less akin to a number of bronzes dealt with above belonging to the early phase of the later Choḷa period. The treatment

[1] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

of the strand of hair falling on either side of the shoulders and the *uttarīya* ends hanging in front on either side of the *padmāsana* prove that this bronze is later than the above Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara. The manner in which the *jaṭā-makuṭa*, the necklaces, the *keyūras* and the face are done is akin to that of the Chandraśekhara (Fig. 192) from Okkūr noticed above and the Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 191) from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other bronzes to be dealt with below. The modelling and proportions of the figure are good. But when compared with the previous figure a certain amount of constriction is apparent in the treatment of the folded legs. Nevertheless the smooth curve at the knees is doubtless due to the persisting traditions of the art of earlier periods. The garment is heavier in this figure and its folds are indicated by less prominent grooves. The bows on either side are not ornate. Attention does not seem to have been bestowed on the proper depiction of the *keyūras*. It is however interesting to note the manner in which the nipples are done here because in quite a number of bronzes of this period this feature is met with. The lotus held in the upper left hand is simpler than that of the previous Lokeśvara but equally beautiful. It is not necessary to mention here the fact that neither in this figure nor in the previous one do we find the pendent shoulder ornament. The absence of this somewhat important detail may be said to indicate that these small bronzes are but exceptions which prove the rule. This Lokeśvara also may be assigned to about the end of the first quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Coming to the Avalokiteśvara,[1] height 14·8 *cm*, it is seen to be an interesting bronze Fig. 199 in more respects than one. It stands on an *āsana* which, though designed like a double *padmāsana*, is not worked with petals. The *bhaṅga* is not completely *tri-bhaṅga* but one approaching very nearly that. The treatment of this posture together with the poses in which the lower arms are held obviously recalls to our mind the striking similarity of this figure to bronzes representing Vīṇādhara of which quite a few have been dealt with above. Probably this is a Buddhist counter-part of that Hindu deity. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is high and its details are clear. The ornament on its four sides is apparently similar to the *keyūras* which adorn the arms and which, in style, is similar to that of the *keyūras* of the previous Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara. The flower designs worked on either side of the head are peculiar to this bronze. The face is of the protruding type and the expression is one of wonder. The large *makara-kuṇḍalas* are worth noting. More interesting than these are the beautiful flower designs that are shown stuck up on the strands of hair falling on either shoulder. The *kaṇṭhīs* including the outermost ring are of the usual type. The shoulder ornament is present on the right side. The *yajñopavīta* and the *udara-bandha* are broad and ornate and they are similar to those of the Jambhala (Fig. 190) discussed above. The torso is obviously constricted as is seen from the more than one bend in the line of the right side. In spite of this, it still retains to some

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49.

extent the classical qualities of modelling which is borne out by the treatment of the chest and the abdomen. The arms of which there are four are also well conceived and executed with skill; and their poses add beauty to the figure. The *aksha-mālā* of the upper right hand is broken and the *kuṇḍikā* held in the upper left hand is simple.

The legs are beautifully modelled and the postures in which they are shown are superb. Though, as usual the hip portion is subdued, the manner in which the thighs are rendered and the lines of the sides are dealt with, is not only commendable but more than compensates the defect met with in the modelling of the torso. There is a simple loin-cloth which however shows prominent hems. Further, though the waist-bands are simple, the *simha-mukha* clasp has apparently become very prominent as is evident from its wide-open mouth. A very interesting detail of the loin-cloth consists of a pair of hanging ends of sashes seen one on each thigh. Their beautiful sway is well brought out by their gentle curves. Though one would expect the knee-caps to be shown prominently, here they are beautifully rounded off. The toes are not very distinct and there are only *pādasaras* on the feet.

This bronze may be assigned to about the beginning of second quarter of the 12th century rather than to the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 200 The Tārā, height 13 *cm*, identified as Khadiravani-Tārā[1] or Śyāma-Tārā by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran may be attributed to this period, again on stylistic grounds. No doubt, the modelling of the figure is excellent and its proportions are beautiful. Nevertheless the facial features, the treatment of the fingers and toes and the elaboration of the ornaments are unmistakably akin to those of the bronzes examined above. The *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the necklace, the *channavīra* and the strands of hair falling on either shoulder are apparently ornate. The *keyūras* are similar to those of the bronzes examined above. An interesting detail of this bronze is the silken garment which is treated in a beautiful manner. In a number of sculptures of goddesses belonging to this period the garment is either shown with prominent folds in the wave-over-wave form or with grooves. Here its plain treatment is singular. The waist-band is simple and there is no *simha-mukha* clasp in it. The loop with a tassel in the middle seen in front of left foot and the flowing end of *uttarīya* hanging down from below the left knee are noteworthy. The lotus held in the left hand is realistic. There are the beaded elbow ornaments.

The figure is seated in *lalita* pose on a *padmāsana*. This *āsana* requires special notice because of its exquisite beauty. Rarely do we meet with *padmāsanas* of this type in sculptures of this period. Its style is such that when it is viewed independent of the figure, it may be taken to belong to an earlier date. But the context in which it occurs

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 54, where B. Bhattacharyya's *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 106–07 is quoted in support of this identification.

is late and its presence here proves not only the persistence of ancient traditions but also the capacity of the *sthapati*. The hanging right foot is supported by a small oval lotus pedestal. There are only *pādasaras* on the feet.

The figure representing Maitreya[1], height 25.2 *cm*, may be examined next. Its style Fig. 201
is almost similar to the above Tārā except for the fact that this figure is slightly plump. In spite of this, its proportions are good and the decorative details are treated in a beautiful manner. These are comparatively simple too. In fact the manner in which the *kirīṭa*, the *kaṇṭhīs*, the loin-cloth and above all the *padmāsana* are done is such as to make one think that the figure belongs to an earlier period. But the workmanship of other details such as the features of the face, the nipples, the *yajñopavīta*, the bow and hanging ends of *uttarīya* and the treatment of the hands, particularly the fingers and palm, are in the style of the bronzes mentioned above. The noteworthy details of this bronze are the beautifully worked *kirīṭa*, the delicate *makara-kuṇḍalas*, the bunch of three stalks of the flowers, the monoliform festoons and tassels and the beautiful *tri-bhaṅga* pose. The shoulder ornament is seen on the right side and there is no other ornament than *pāda-saras* on the feet.

It should be mentioned here that the *padmāsana* of this figure is almost similar to that of the Tārā examined above. It is therefore clear that during the period to which these bronzes belong the *sthapatis* designed a variety of types of *padmāsanas*. The simplicity of the style of the *bhadrāsana* is quite in keeping with the *padmāsana* and it adds beauty to the figure. The learned author of the *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes* has assigned this bronze to late Choḷa period *i.e.*, to the period between 1070 and 1250 A.D. But we believe that we shall not be far from the real date when we ascribe it to the second quarter of the 12th century A.D.

The figure, height 53·5 *cm*, said to represent a Choḷa queen[2] is in the style in which Fig. 202
the bronzes discussed above are, but it is of a definitely superior workmanship. This is due to the subject matter. Before proceeding to examine it in detail, its identification requires to be settled.

It was originally identified as a Choḷa queen. This has been accepted with approval by the author of the section on bronzes in the book on *The Art of India and Pakistan*.[3] But though, in the absence of the *channavīra*, this identification may be taken to be correct its presence has a significance in the identification of this figure. If we examine the portraits of queens that have come down to us, not a single example of them[4] shows

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 51, Pl. VIII, Fig. 2.
[2] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VI, p. 23, Pl. XIII and XIV.
[3] P. 75, Pl. 57, Fig. 321.
[4] T. G. Aravamuthan, *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, Figs. 2, 3, 5, 12, 14, 21.

this detail although some of them are seen endowed with a sacred thread as for instance the queens of Kṛishṇadevarāya[1] (Fig. 278). A *channavīra* is seen on the other hand only in such bronzes representing Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Śrīdevī, Bhūdevi, Ṛishipatnī and Sītā, amongst which there is very little difference. In view of the fact that no bronze representation of Kṛishṇa has been known belonging to this period, this bronze may not represent any one of the former two goddesses. Nor can this be taken to represent either Śrī or Bhūdevī because these goddesses should invariably have *karaṇḍa-makuṭas*. So, the alternative left is that this bronze probably represents Sītā. That this is a very plausible identification is borne out not merely by the fact that this has *channavīra* in association with the *dhammilla* headdress but also by the fact of its extreme similarity to the Sītā of the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr Rāma group. It is a pity that the other bronzes showing Rāma etc. of this group have not come down to us.

The face is square and its features are sharp and life-like. The eyes are long and the pupils are indicated by incised circles. There is a veiled smile in the expression. The ears are empty.

There are two *kaṇṭhīs*, and a gracefully designed *channavīra*, with a long strip in between the two courses, is seen on the body. The navel is sensuous in character, and the torso as a whole is modelled in a splendid manner. Though the breasts are not as full as those of the early bronzes representing feminine figures, here their classical quality is revealed not only by the smooth rendering of them but also by the absence of emphasis on the nipples. The treatment of the shoulders is beautiful. Here the shoulder ornament is seen on either side. The arms are beautiful and they are exceedingly well embellished by the pronged *keyūras* which show beautiful festoons and tassels. Elbow ornaments of which that on the right arm alone shows prominently the projecting bit, and a long series of bangles on the wrists are seen on the arms. The bangles of this type have been seen in earlier bronzes also. The right arm is shown in the pleasing *lola* pose while the left arm is contracted and held up with its hand in the *kaṭaka-mudrā*. The lines of these arms preserve in a remarkable manner the qualities of bronzes belonging to a period of a few decades before. The rendering of the fingers is exquisite.

The hips, as is usual in the case of images of this period, are rather slightly below normal. The graceful bending of the right leg has made the left hip project out; but this has however been kept well under control so as to avoid the bending of the line of the left side too much which, had it been attempted, would have marred the beauty of the bronze. The garment reaches to the ankles and it bears beautiful and clear-cut flower-and-wheel designs on it. The girdle is manifold and it is tied in such a manner that a

[1] *Ibid.*, Fig. 21.

crescent-shaped hollow is created just below the navel. In the place of *simha-mukha*, there are rows of thick oblong bits which probably stand for gems. From the lowest band of the girdle hang down large and wide festoons alternated by tassels both worked in an excellent manner. The gem-like thing of the festoons and the beautiful pendants attached to the tips of the tassels are specially noteworthy. An end of the cloth which is tucked up on the right side hangs down with its tip frilled beautifully. The other end of the cloth is seen in between the legs shown as a broad tape with vertical lines incised on it. The *bhaṅga* of the figure is also dealt with tastefully.

The back view of the figure shows a few interesting details. The workmanship of Fig. 203
the *dhammilla* headdress is delicate and fine which is certainly much advanced over the same detail of the Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr Sītā (Fig. 97). The manner in which the twisted hair is held like a bun by means of a horizontal ribbon is beautiful. But the most interesting thing about this headdress is the flower-like ornament called *tirukuppū* in Tamil. As there are no braided locks hiding the back of the neck, the upper parts of necklaces are also seen and from the lowermost one of them hangs down the characteristic pendant. The details of the *channavīra* are very clear here. Here is also seen the holding of the girdle by means of a belt with a four-faced clasp.

Coming to the modelling, its exquisite character is apparent and the style of the hips and other parts is simply grand. The *bhaṅga* of the figure looks prettier from this side.

The figure stands on a *padmāsana* the petals of which show marginal lines not quite in keeping with the spirit and beauty of the figure itself. Nevertheless it seems to be the original *āsana* and suggests that this school of bronzes was not quite consistent in so far as the style of the *āsanas* is concerned. That this school was also experimenting with fresh lines of approach is evident from the existence of more styles of work than one as will be shown below.

The date of this marvellous bronze has been given variously as 13th century by Mr. S. Gopalachari[1] and as 13th-14th century in the book *The Art of India and Pakistan* (p. 75). The above description would have made it clear that this late date cannot be sustained any longer on account of the fact that details of workmanship of this bronze are characteristic of bronzes of the early 12th century only, they being very much developed in the bronzes assignable to the 13th-14th century A.D. as will be shown in the proper context below. Thus, this may be said to be one of the splendid specimens of the art of the period and may be assigned to about the end of the third decade of the 12th century.

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VI, p. 23.

Fig. 204 The next bronze to be examined is that which has been described as Annapūrṇādevī by Mr. S. Gopalachari.[1] Here also the identification does not seem to be correct. If the bronze represents that goddess then it cannot have a headdress as is seen here. For, representations of Pārvatī in any one of her aspects should necessarily have either a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* or a *jaṭā-makuṭa*. Secondly a representation of Annapūrṇā should have also a bowl of food carried by an attendant who is missing here. Thirdly an image of the goddess is rarely made to stand on *bhadrāsana* alone, because a *padmāsana* is more or less an invariable concomitant of such bronzes. Whom else does this represent? The solution to this question does not seem to be far off. An important detail met with in this figure is the double-faced laddle, held in its right hand. A few sculptures where a woman is shown not only with the laddle in her hand but also with the headdress almost similar to that of the bronze in question, are known. We mean the sculptures representing the scene of Śiva taking a resplendent form and stripping himself of all clothes, going about the quarters of the Ṛishis of the Dārukāvana abegging, when the wives of the Ṛishis, the Ṛishi-patnīs, having become infatuated with love towards the lord of ravishing beauty, coming out of their houses and offering alms to the Lord. An early sculpture of this theme is found in a temple in a suburb of Tanjore[2] and in that a Ṛishi-patnī finds a place. This Ṛishi-patnī may be seen to be almost similar to the bronze under discussion except for the absence of the *channavīra* in this bronze figure. The occurrence of a Ṛishi-patnī of this type in the Bhikshāṭana sculptures carved on the pillars of the *maṇḍapas* of later date is common. So, it is clear that whenever a Bhikshāṭana figure in bronze was made, the custom was to have a Ṛishi-patnī figure also associated with it. And the present figure seems therefore to belong to such a group and hence it is a representation of a Ṛishi-patnī, not a goddess. The beauty of this bronze is apparent and it is unfortunate that its associate, the Bhikshāṭaṇa, which should have been a still more beautiful specimen of the art, has not been found.

The face is square in shape and its details are obviously realistic. This realism is enhanced by the beautiful series of *kuṭila-kuntalas* (tinty curls of hair) that adorn the forehead. The ears are empty. Behind is seen exceedingly tastefully dressed hair of which the ends are depicted fan-wise with a marginal series of curly hair. Garlands are worked, demarcating the circular *bandha* of hair from the head and their workmanship is fine. The facial expression reveals unmistakbly the subtle smile born out of wonder and joy at the sight of Bhikshāṭana. Thick gem-set *kaṇṭhīs* and a *māṅgalya-sūtra* are seen on the neck. The breasts, though not full, are treated proportionately and they have prominent nipples. This feature, however, has not been seen in

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20, Pl. VIII and IX.

[2] P. R. Srinivasan, *Important works of Art of the early Chola period from near Tanjore*, in the *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, 1955-57, pp. 51-53, Fig. 6.

this fashion in any of the feminine figures examined so far but which becomes a characteristic of female figures of subsequent periods. Just because of this feature, it is not possible to attribute the bronze to a later period, for a majority of other details do pin it to the period with which we are concerned. At the most, this feature may be taken to suggest that it has begun to be fashionable from now on. The torso is modelled beautifully but the lines of the sides have become rather stiff. This is exemplified by the line of demarcation separating the hips from the part above waist. This line has been dealt with cleverly as it still retains the continuous flow characteristic of lines of the earlier bronzes.

The shoulders are rendered here as in the previous bronzes and only on the right side a slender shoulder ornament is seen. Unlike the Sītā figure examined above, here the usual strand of hair with curls and flowers is seen on either shoulder. As usual the arms are comparatively thick and short. The armlets have the prongs above and a series of festoons below. There is the *vāji-bandha* with a prominent projection on the outside and with a knot in front. A set of three thick *valayas* shown wide apart from each other is seen on the wrist. The left arm is in *lola* pose with fingers bent. The right arm is bent up and its hand holds the laddle. The poses of the hands are rendered in a pleasing manner.

Just as in the previous bronzes, here too the hips are subdued and the position below it upto the tip of the toes may be seen to be as excellently treated as in the Sītā figure discussed above. No sign of faltering in the depiction of the lines or in the treatment of the mass is seen. Neither does this part suffer from any undue prominence given to the knee-joint. The garment is thick and is decorated with patterns similar to those met with in the Sītā (Fig. 202). It must be noted that on the right leg the garment is seen above the knee while it reaches almost the ankles in the left leg. And the end of cloth hanging between the legs is attached to the left leg with its tip just jetting out. The girdle is gem-set throughout and the cup-shaped bend below the navel is noteworthy on account of its similarity to the same detail of decoration of the Sītā examined above. This, coupled with the designs on the garment, is an unmistakable evidence to prove that both these figures are probably from the studio of a single *sthapati*. The *uttarīya* however, is flat but nevertheless it has the tassels and festoons. The hanging end of this, seen on the left side, is somewhat different from the same detail of the Sītā, because here it shows designs whereas in the latter it is plain.

The pose of *dvi-bhaṅga* is beautifully suggested by the slightly bent right leg and the torso.

It is the back view that brings out the glory of the headdress as well as the posture. **Fig. 205** The hair is wonderfully well wrought and the circular *bandha* is not only pleasing but

also graceful. The manner in which the garland is worn speaks volumes about the capacity of the master mind behind the figure. Among the known bronzes of this class, there is none which can be compared with this for the orginality of treatment of hair alone. The hair-doing of the Sītā from Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr and that of the Sītā examined above is no doubt beautiful, but the imagination displayed in the depiction of the headdress of this bronze is really of a higher order. Then, the details of the *kaṇṭhīs* are also seen at the back. The pendant is present but it is rather subdued, and there is not the heart-like design at its end. An interesting thing seen from this side is that the decorative element seen on either shoulder is not really of hair as appears on the front side, but is only a curly hair-like design in form which starts on either side from the *māṅgalya-sūtra*.

The beauty of the torso is well brought out in this side, the curving of the line of the left side and the splendidly smooth and round modelling of the buttocks adding charm. Similarly the delicacy of treatment of the garment and the girdle is seen at its best on this side. Likewise the excellence of the *bhaṅga* can be enjoyed better from this side.

The pedestal is a simple *bhadrāsana* and there is no *padmāsana* above it.

Now it is clear that like the Sītā, this is also an interesting specimen of the art of the period under discussion and it may be assigned to the middle of the second quarter[1] of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 206 The bronze representing a Choḷa King[2], height 74 *cm*, may be considered next. It stands on a *padmāsana* in the *sama-bhaṅga* posture with hands kept in the *añjali* pose. The *makuṭa* and the loin-cloth with its *siṁha-mukha* clasp are ornate. In fact every one of the details of this figure is chiselled extremely well *e.g.*, the necklets and *keyūras*. The face is rather square. Its features are clear-cut. The expression suggests self-absorption and tranquillity. There are only two necklets, the usual ring-like necklet seen outermost in the bronzes of this period is absent. The *channavīra* is, however, slender and is treated in the manner in which such details are dealt with by the *sthapatis* of this period.

The torso is not particularly well modelled. The modelling of the arms is suggestive of strength, although the proportions of the shoulders do not seem to fit properly with those of the chest. The other noteworthy points are the projecting nipples and the elbow ornaments. The latter are beaded and they show the projecting pieces conspicuously. For quite a considerable time now bronzes with this feature were not

[1] It must be mentioned here that the bronze illustrated on plate facing p. 52 of *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 4, is another superb specimen of the class of the above discussed bronzes. It also represents Sītā.

[2] *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VI, pp. 22-23, Pl. XII; *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 74, Pl. 55, Fig. 381.

met with. In fact this seems to us to be one of the latest bronzes to show this feature, bronzes of the subsequent periods, showing this detail so prominently being almost nil. Interestingly the shoulder ornament is seen on the left side only. A flower-like design is shown between the hands which are treated with great skill.

The ornateness of the loin-cloth is apparent which is brought out clearly by the treatment of the *simha-mukha* and the festoons and tassels hanging from it. The border of the cloth is noteworthy. The ends of the cloth may be seen to be dealt with rather in a 'modern' way. The defective modelling of the leg is quite obvious not only from the prominent knees but also from the natural contraction of the lines at that place. A very important detail of this bronze is its anklet seen on the left leg only, besides the *pādasara*. This type of anklet characterises the sculptures of the western and eastern *gopuras* of the temple at Chidambaram. A different type of anklet was seen in the two beautiful bronzes (Figs. 171 and 173) from Sundarapperumāḷ-kovil which was similar to the anklet seen in some of the sculptures from the temple at Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-cholapuram. But from now onwards this additional anklet becomes more or less a constant feature of bronzes. In several bronzes of subsequent periods, this is seen on both ankles. But later-day bronzes without this characteristic are not uncommon.

The *padmāsana* is simple but delicately worked; its petals are broad and the marginal lines are rather faint. Tips of petals are not emphasised. As a whole its form and details have been beautifully conceived and tastefully executed. On these grounds this may also be assigned to the second quarter of the 12th century A.D. but not to the 13th century (*J.I.S O.A.*, Vol. VI, p. 22); nor to the 12-13th century (*The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 74).

The Chaṇḍikeśvara [1], height 45 *cm*, from Tanjore District may be examined here. It Fig. 207
has been idenitified as Aiyanār in the *Catalogue*, but as this figure has the third eye like the Chaṇḍikeśvara (Fig. 112) from Okkūr this represents the saint. As the *Catalogue* says: "This image has all the characteristics of an image of Chola type, including the projecting elbow ornaments." We have, however, to give reasons for considering this figure at this place. The chief points in favour of our attribution are the prominent facial features including the sharp nose, the heavy but finely worked necklets of which at least three are in evidence including the lower-most *kaṇṭhī* with gems, elbow ornament, and the rather unnatural manner in which the *yajñopavīta* is bent. Above all there is the anklet on the leg bent and kept on the pedestal. Unlike that of the Chola King (Fig. 206) this anklet is beaded. The other noteworthy features of this bronze are the following :—

1 *Catalogue*, p. 128, No. 4, where it is identified as Aiyanār.

The hair is arranged in a beautiful *jaṭā-bhāra* fashion with rows of curly hair shown in tiers crowned by an exquisite flower design. The fillet-like decoration too is well executed. The face is broad and chubby and the smiling expression is full of scintillating charm. The treatment of the hair which falls on either shoulder is pleasing as also that of the *keyūras*. The gestures of the hands *i.e.*, *kaṭaka* of the right hand and the *ābhāya-varada* of the left hand are superb. The modelling of the arms however seems to be slightly weak, while that of the legs and the rest of the body for that matter, is nearly perfect and their proportions commendable. In spite of the fact that the figure is seated erect, the *lola* leg together with the poses of the hands coupled, to some extent, with the slightly inclined *paraśu* held in the right hand makes the bronze life-like. This shows that here is a combination of two apparently opposite qualities which has been naively introduced by the *sthapati* who must have been not only fully conversant with the background of the story of the subject-matter but also a past master in his work. No bows or ends of cloth are seen on either side of the figure. The sashes seem to be simple and their knot in front is gem-set.

The pedestal which is a *bhadrāsana* is high and has classical mouldings. The depression above the rounded moulding is wide and has also the vertical spacers. A tall spike is seen on either side of it. The style of this pedestal and to some extent that of the figure too, give an impression that the bronze is older than the period to which we attribute it. The treatment of some of the parts and the decorations being too ornate this may be attributed to about the fourth decade of the 12th century A.D. However, we hasten to say again that this assignment is not by any means conclusive and is subject to modification should the future researches require it.

Fig. 208 The next bronze which may be said to belong to the same period as the above is the standing Umāsahita,[1] ht. 43 *cm*, from Seṭṭipulam, Tanjore District. Even at the outset the peculiar characteristics of both the figures comprising the group will be apparent. The most important amongst the details which are responsible for giving this impression are the stiff limbs, broad *kaṇṭhīs*, broad and deeply looping waist-cords, the anklet of Śiva and the ornament on either shoulder of Umā. All these coupled with the *āsanas* with developed parts make the group look somewhat unrefined and influenced by a strong local tradition. In this respect this group is of great interest.

Fig 209 The Viṇādhara, ht. 80 *cm*, from Pudūr East in the Salem District may be found to share a majority of details with the Śiva of the above mentioned Umāsahita (Fig. 208). Here however the modelling is better and the facial features are more beautifully depicted. Interestingly here anklets are seen on both the legs. Moreover the beautifully swaying

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 104, No. 1.

end of the waist-band seen attached to the left thigh is a noteworthy feature which is found to characterise some of the later-day specimens. The *āsanas* are somewhat unrefined and the *padmāsana* has become very high, rather unusually high. This bronze may be assigned to about the same period.

The Chaṇḍikeśvara, ht. 59 *cm*, belonging to the Eton College[1] which is dealt with at length by the authors of the *Catalogue* who have said that this, together with two other Chaṇḍikeśvara bronzes which also show their hair fastened behind with a ribbon just as in this bronze, seems to be " more or less definitely of Choḷa type ", seems to belong to this period. This is borne out by the emphasis laid on angularities as for instance the elbows and knees, by the inartistic decorative details and the very poor workmanship of pedestal. The last mentioned item, however, does not seem to be original. The stance and expression of the figure are attractive enough to make it one of the good specimens of the art as obtained during the second quarter of the 12th century A.D. Fig. 210

The Sūrya 56 *cm* high, from Hariśchandrapuram, in the Tanjore District stands in *sama-bhaṅga* pose just like a Vishṇu. This attitude might be taken to suggest that both are considered as more or less identical in conception. In fact Sūrya is also called Sūrya-nārāyaṇa. Noteworthy features of this excellently modelled and highly proportionate bronze are the nimbus behind the head, the characteristically tapering *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the shoulder decoration occurring on the right side only; rather heavy *kaṇṭhīs*, beautifully swaying *yajñopavīta*, ornate *simha-mukha* on the waist-band, the looped sash, and realistically depicted bows and ends of cloth on either side. More interesting than these are the lotuses held in the two hands. They are exceedingly realistic in workmanship and may be said to be superb specimens of their kind. The manner in which the fingers holding them are depicted is also beautiful. Added to these, the *padmāsana* on which the figure stands, is also a good specimen of its kind. In short, this figure is not only interesting from the point of view of iconography but also a remarkable work of the period to which the above figure belongs. Fig. 211

The Chandraśekhara, in the Musee Guimet of Paris, is an interesting specimen because of the inscription it bears. It has been dealt with in the *Catalogue* on pp. 100-01. The inscription means as follows :— Fig. 212

" Hail! Prosperity! The god of Hastichālai, *i.e.*, Hastiśalāi (? elephant-stable) [who is] carried in śrī-bali (procession) in the local temple of Phalabharīśvara (Śiva) in the village of Aruḷmoḷidevapura ". On palaeographical grounds this inscription is assigned to the later Choḷa times, and consequently the bronze is to be dated to the same period.

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 131-32, No. 8.

The decorative details such as broad *kaṇṭhīs*, swaying ornament on each shoulder, the unrefined modelling, rather stiff posture, the anklet on the left leg and the badly finished *āsanas* which are characteristic of the bronzes of this period, go to support the above attribution. However the two hanging ends of the waist-cord and the chain-like piece
Fig. 213 hanging in between the legs are beautifully worked. At the back the *śiraś-cakra* the schematic arrangement of the hanging strands of hair and the modelling of the buttocks are also well done. The slender chain without a pendant hanging from the back of the neck is noteworthy. In general, this bronze is akin to the Śiva of the Umāsahita group from Seṭṭipulam and the Vīṇādhara from Pudūr East This goes to show that it belongs to the same period as the latter.

Fig. 214 The bronze group of Pradoshamūrti, ht. about 50 *cm*, from Veḷḷāḷagaram, Tanjore District is a pretty little piece belonging to the same period. The Śiva stands in beautiful *tri-bhaṅga* and in the attitude of embracing Pārvatī. His ornaments may be seen to be similar to those of the Vīṇādhara from Pudūr East (Fig. 209). But the anklets are not seen here. Pārvatī too stands in the beautiful *tri-bhaṅga* and her workmanship is seen to be akin to that of the Umā of the Seṭṭipulam group. (Fig. 208). Unlike the latter here the modelling is refined and the details are chastened well. The manner in which the hip and breasts are treated is superb and this quality is enhanced by the beauty of the draperies and realistic flexions. The flat *prabhā* with a series of big square perforations in its middle and showing twenty-four flames each with three tongues, except the top-most one which has five tongues, is an interesting specimen of its kind and its style being characteristic of the *prabhā* of the period, it also helps in assigning the bronze to about the middle of the second quarter of the 12th century A.D. The *padmāsana* is also well done, but the *bhadrāsana* shows definite signs of stylisation.

Fig. 215 The Vṛishavāhana, without consort and *Nandi*, from Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram[1] is another interesting specimen of the period both for its iconographic speciality and for the beauty of its workmanship. The striking feature of this piece is its simplicity. Secondly this is the first image of this aspect of Śiva to show four arms. Previously two Vṛishavāhanas one from Taṇḍantoṭṭam (Fig. 67) and the other from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 128) have been seen, which have only two arms. Thirdly the latter as well as the one from Vedāraṇyam,[2] stand leaning on the right side whereas here the figure stands leaning to the left which has necessitated the showing of the lower right arm in *kaṭy-avalambita* pose which has been treated beautifully. The other arms, shoulders and the torso are all executed with consummate skill. The legs too are treated in a superb manner except for the prominence given to the knee-joints. The posture of the left leg crossing the right one is rendered in a splendid manner. In all these respects as also in the simple

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 69.
[2] O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. XCIV.

shorts, this figure is akin to the Choḷa King (Fig. 206), although from the artistic point of view this is certainly superior to the other.

The Naṭeśa, height 38 *cm*, from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu which is smaller than the other Naṭeśa (Fig. 164) from the same place discussed above may be taken up now. It is one of the images referred to more than once in connection with the problem of dating of bronzes by the authors of the *Catalogue*, pp. 59–60, 110–11. It is not now in the Madras Museum. A brief description of it is given by the authors on p. 113. It is necessary to add a few particulars to that description. Even at a glance its features suggest effeminacy rather than exuberant dynamism which is apparent in the Naṭeśas such as the one from Tiruppanandāḷ (Fig. 196), not to speak of the magnificent Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu itself. The upper left arm is held rather low while in other Naṭeśas it is stretched out fully. *Jaṭās* being absent in this too, it is impossible to say anything about its decorations including the representation of *Gaṅgā*. The strands of hair seen on either shoulder not only hang low but also are ornate. There is a pair of pendent strings hanging from the right shoulder in front. They are however treated in a way different from that of the string of the bigger Naṭeśa. The arms and the torso are well executed. Here also the flowing ends of the stomach-band are missing due to the breaking away of half of the *prabhā* on the proper left side. The legs and the feet are modelled well but there is the constriction of the lines at the knee-joint and its consequent projection which is a characteristic of bronzes of this period. The toes and the *pādasaras* of several *kiṅkiṇīs* are treated in an exquisite manner. A very interesting and noteworthy decorative element is seen on the right leg, above the ankle, which is not a *nūpura* (anklet) but usually called as *kiṅkiṇī*. It must be mentioned here that among the bronzes dealt with above, some possess one more ornament on the leg besides the *padāsara*, and only one of them shows an ornament of this type namely the Bhikshāṭana from Tiruveṇkāḍu (Fig. 175), and it is conspicuously absent from Naṭeśa bronzes. On the other hand, especially in the Naṭeśas belonging to subsequent periods, this ornament is invariably met with. Not only is it absent from early bronze Naṭeśas but from early stone Naṭeśas also. A beginning of this detail is noticed in a few Śaivite icons found amongst those occupying the niches of the western *gopura* of the temple at Chidambaram, which is the earliest of the four *gopuras* of the place datable to about the middle of the 12th century. By the time the eastern *gopura* of the same temple was completed, which happened round about 1200 A.D., this feature became more prominent and regular in the icons representing various aspects of Śiva. In the sculptures belonging to the north and south *gopuras* of the same temple which may be assigned to a date somewhere between the first and the third quarter of the 12th century A.D., this feature gets modified.[1] In addition to this detail, the style of the *prabhā*

Fig. 216

[1] Confirmation of this view was made possible by an examination of photographs of quite a significant number of sculptures of all the four *gopuras*. Mr. James C. Harle of the Oxford University who made this collection of photographs was kind enough to show them to me, and I am thankful to him for this.

of this Naṭeśa which is of the variety showing perforations along its outer fringe and the style of the flames coupled with the insignificant dwarf and cup-shaped lower part of the *padmāsana* indicate a date about the middle of the 12th century. In the light of this, the statement contained in the *Catalogue* that "the maker of the larger and more elaborate one was acquainted with the smaller, or possibly with some earlier image which influenced both: (and) the presence of long necklaces suggests a Vijayanagar or later date for these images" (p. 111) requires modification. For, this smaller Naṭeśa is definitely later than the bigger one; and the Nateśas of Vijayanagar times, as will be shown in the proper context below, have highly developed details as for example the very much developed headgear which is unmistakable in the Naṭeśa from Belūr (Fig. 294) dated to 16th century A.D.

Fig. 217 The standing Umāsahita group from Peruñjeri, Tanjore District may be said to belong to the same period as the above Naṭeśa. At first glance, the group would seem to have an ancient look. This is due to the beautiful proportions and refined decorations. But the high and ornate *jaṭā-makuṭa* the unnaturally swaying *yajñopavīta*, the thick cluster of *kaṇṭhīs* and the poor disposition of the arms of Śiva are found to be characteristic of bronzes of this period. Umā's figure, however, is excellently modelled, which is evident from the proportionate arms and legs, beautiful breasts and broad hips. Even the elongate *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is in the nature of adding to the gracefulness of the bronze. The fingers are tender and life-like and the poses of the arms are remarkably realistic. The drapery and the festoons on the waist too are executed with taste and refinement. The two *āsanas* of the figures are also well finished. Thus this group may be said to be one of the few outstanding Umāsahita bronzes known. It may also be attributed to about the middle of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 218 At this juncture the group of Naṭeśa, ht. 90 *cm*, and Śivakāmasundarī, ht. 73·5 *cm*, from Melapperumpaḷḷam, Tanjore District, requires examination. This Naṭeśa is of a peculiar type, with a small head, *jaṭās* not spreading on either side but falling at the back and accompanied by a couple of *gaṇas* playing on musical instruments. This is the first example of this type that we examine here, and there are innumerable specimens of this type in several temples especially in the Tanjore District. Though this bronze is found to be defective in many respects such as the disproportionate limbs, the unnatural manner of crossing of the uplifted left leg and the stylised end of stomach-band seen to be long enough to extend upto the bottom of the left prop of the *prabhā*, it has some very interesting features too. Amongst them are the beautifully done fingers, the early manner of holding the kettle-drum, the simple decorations on the head and the body, the beautiful *udara-bandha* ends attaching themselves to the *prabhā*, the *pādasaras* with *kiṅkiṇīs* and the characteristic calf-ornament with a single *kiṅkiṇī*. As has been said

above the last mentioned item has become an invariable feature of Naṭeśas produced from this period onwards.

The Apasmāra Purusha is of small size but his features are realistically executed. The *gaṇas*, the one on the proper left playing on cymbals and the other on the proper right playing on pot-drum (*ghaṭam* in Skt., *kuḍa-muḻā* in Tamil) are also shown in expressive gestures.

The most interesting item of the figure is its *prabhā* which is of the tubular variety possessing only nineteen flames on its outer edge. Each flame has only three tongues except the one at the apex, which is five-tongued. The manner of depiction of the *prabhā*, in a beautiful arch-like form, is apparently due to the strong and persistent old traditions, and *prabhās* of this type are rarely met with in the subsequent periods. It is attached to an oblong *āsana* showing a cornice-like part worked into petals of lotus. This is rather peculiar. But the *bhadrāsana*, on which this *āsana* which is moulded together with the figure and the *prabhā* is placed, is still more peculiar, as it shows petal decoration at its bottom, a feature which is found to characterise the *bhadrāsanas* of much later periods. On account of this, it is rather difficult to say if this separate *āsana* is original.

It is the Śivakāmasundarī of this group that is more attractive and a more beautiful specimen than the Naṭeśa. Except for the somewhat heavy ornaments like the necklaces and bangles, the figure as a whole is noteworthy for its noble features such as slender but proportionate limbs, beautifully modelled torso with full breasts and hips, realistic fingers, calm and beautiful expression, drapery with characteristic lines suggesting folds, the gem-set waist-bands from which hang finely worked festoons and tassels and the beautifully swaying *yajñopavīta*. The shoulder ornament is seen only on the right side, which is an early feature. The very flexion in which the figure stands is graceful and this gracefulness is embellished by the *kaṭaka* and *lola* poses of the right hand and left arm respectively. The workmanship of the two *āsanas* is quite in keeping with the tenor of the figure, the petals of the *padmāsana* being especially well finished. This figure is therefore a remarkable example of the art as it obtained about the middle of the 12th century A.D. Fig. 219

The figures of the Somāskanda group, ht. 50 *cm*, from Veḷḷūr Seruvarai in the Arantangi Taluk of the Tanjore District have features very similar to those met with in the Umāsahita from Peruñjeri (Fig. 217) discussed above and this therefore may be attributed to about the same period. Fig. 220

The Pārvatī, ht. 78 *cm*, from the same place is seen to be akin in several respects to the Śivakāmasundarī (Fig. 219) of the Melapperumpaḷḷam Naṭeśa group. The differences Fig. 221

in detail met with here are the presence of the shoulder ornament on both sides, the drapery marked by a double parallel line and the somewhat ornate *āsanas*.

In modelling and stance, this figure seems to be even better than the Śivakāmasundari. The form of the face and the expression there, may be said to be identical with those of the other figure. This bronze may also be dated to the middle of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 222 Here we should examine the pretty little figure representing a human being from the Śiva temple at Koḍumuḍi in the Coimbatore District. Quite a few remarkable bronzes of an earlier date from the same place have already been dealt with above. According to local people this figure is said to represent Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār. A bronze representing that Śaiva saint from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 180) has been dealt with above. Though between these two figures there is a semblance of identity of workmanship and details, the latter one has significantly its hands in *añjali* pose and it shows a dagger tucked up at one side and wears a leather apron and chappals. The figure under discussion holds its right arm bent at right angle to the torso and the left arm bent and kept at a higher level. Each is held in the posture of holding something. Besides, the figure does not show either dagger or chappal or apron. On the other hand, it wears a finely worked shorts with waist-bands of exquisite quality. In addition, there is the rosary of beads on the neck hanging beautifully on the chest, the simple armlets and the fine elbow ornament with a small projecting piece. The hair is also dressed in a beautiful manner. So, from these beautifully worked ornaments and drapery, this figure may be taken to represent not the hunter saint Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār but some one else. This coupled with the poses of the hand which are suggestive of holding the cymbals, may be said to show that the person represented here is Sundarmūrti-nāyanār.

The modelling is slender but proportionate. The flexion (*ābhaṅga*) suggested by the slightly bent left leg is graceful. The facial features are clear-cut and the torso, especially the chest portion, is executed well. The modelling of the shoulders is characteristic of the bronzes of this period. The most interesting detail met with in this piece is the anklets seen one on each ankle. This was not present in the Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār or other figures of earlier periods, but which becomes a regular feature of a majority of figures of the later periods.

Fig. 223 The back view of this piece shows the peculiar manner of dressing up of the hair which is also a characteristic of Sundaramūrti-nāyanār. The beauty of the modelling is clearly seen in this side, especially that of the back suggests power. As in the case of all the bronzes representing subsidiary figures, here too the *āsana*, is not well worked, although its form is quite pleasing. Thus it is a rare example of the art and it may be dated to the middle of the 12th century A.D.

The beautiful bronze Naṭeśa[1] now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London may be considered now. Due to the excellence of photograph and to the uniform weathering of the figure, the bronze has a silken soft look, although its modelling suffers from many a defect. For instance, the arms are short and their lines are rugged as is obvious in the upper and lower left arms; the same is true of the legs too and it is apparent in the uplifted left leg. The manner in which the latter is disposed is not at all artistic because instead of stretching the leg sidewards, it seems to be jutting out too much in front. However, it may be remembered here that such deficiencies have begun to characterise the bronzes of this period and they abound in those of the subsequent periods. Thus from now on one can see the gradual decline in the standards of the art. Fig. 224

The special features of the bronze are as follows: The face is of the protruding type of the period but its rounded features are beautiful. There is only a single row of feathers in the head arranged *makuṭa*-wise, not fan-wise. The whirling locks, five on each side, are also shown in a manneristic way and they are decorated with leafy design. The most interesting detail here is the big-sized mermaid in *añjali* representing *Gaṅgā* shown at the top right of the *prabhā*, which is quite a novel way of depicting the detail. The characteristic broad *kaṇṭhī* and the shoulder ornament on the right side only are seen. As usual the kettle-drum is held by the fingers. The stomach cloth is simple and both of its ends, with a single wave, are attached to the *prabhā*. The shorts and the waist-cords are nicely worked. Interestingly instead of a *pādasara* of *kiṅkiṇīs*, an ornate *pādasara* is seen on each foot. Besides, there is on each ankle, an anklet without any *kiṅkiṇī* attached to it, a decoration which has become a characteristic of the bronzes of this and subsequent periods. The *prabhā* is also simple and is neither flat nor tubular, and it does not have any perforated part as in the smaller Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 216). There are twenty-one flames, each with three tongues, except the topmost one which has five, fringing the outer edge of the *prabhā*. They are however not particularly well finished. But the form of the *prabhā* is of the ancient oval type similar to that of the Velāṅkaṇṇi and other Naṭeśas noticed above. Interestingly it is attached to the oval-shaped small *padmāsana* of which the petals are worked thick and somewhat realistically.

The Apasmāra Purusha is well-modelled but the details are not clearly seen. This bronze may be assigned to the beginning of the third quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Now we shall examine the Rāma and Sītā from Maṇkkāl in the Nannilam Taluk of the Tanjore District. The other two figures representing Lakshmaṇa and Hanumān have

[1] It is reproduced on Pl. XXVI and XXVIIA and on the jacket of the book entitled *The wonder that was Ind*, by A.L. Basham and as Pl. 14A in V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* (Oxford University, 1958).

not been discovered. In both these figures the striking feature is their heavy modelling. Otherwise they are found to be excellent examples of the art. Their size is considerable, Rāma being 114 *cm* high and Sītā 83 *cm* high, which shows the extreme heights to which the technique of making images in *cire perdue* method had reached by the time they were made.

Fig. 225 Rāma stands in the slight *ālīḍha* posture which is beautifully depicted, as is seen in the dextrous manner in which the right hip is dealt with and the beautiful way in which the left leg is bent and shown as though moving with steadied steps. The ornaments are however depicted in very low relief although their details are interesting and beautiful. Of these the *simha-mukha* knot on the waist-band and the festoons are noteworthy. The shoulder ornament is seen on both sides here. The face shows rather sharp features and the manner of showing the eyes and lips is not good. The *kirīṭa* is high and stylised but it does not look very ornate as in some of the later-day figures. There are the usual broad *kaṇṭhīs* and the wavy form of the *yajñopavīta* is beautiful. The torso is powerfully moulded and a noteworthy feature is that as in all previously noticed images here too there is no mark on the chest, one which appears in some of the later-day images
Fig. 226 which will be noticed below where its significance will be indicated. At the back the modelling and the workmanship of the decorative details are clearly seen.

Fig. 227 That Sītā is also by the same hand is unmistakable; all the beauty of modelling and decoration met with in the Rāma is markedly seen here also. The details that are special to this figure are the beautiful *tri-bhaṅga* pose, the bun-like *dhammilla* headdress of which the full glory is seen only on the back, the *kuṭila-kuntalas*, the *māṅgalya-sūtra* on the neck, the long and slender *hāra* of thin beads, shown twisted in a beautiful manner in between the breasts which are themselves sensuously modelled as full and rounded and not in an atrophied manner as is seen in many of the later-day figures of goddesses, the *mekhalā* made of links of elongated diamond shape, the broad hips enclosed by smoothly flowing lines, the thick series of close-fitting bangles on the wrists and a similar type of anklets on the ankles. At the back (Fig. 226), the depiction of the headdress and the modelling of the part below the waist are specially noteworthy. Each of these two figures stands on a *padmāsana* of which the petals are shown only by means of grooves which is not quite a satisfactory manner of doing this important detail. On grounds of style, these two remarkable bronzes may be attributed to the middle of the third quarter of the 12th century A.D.

The Śivakāmasundarī, forming a group with the beautiful Naṭeśa (Fig. 137) in the Big Temple at Tanjore may be examined. Its affinity to the Śvakāmsundarī (Fig. 219) from Melapperumpaḷḷam noticed above is great. But here we find sharper features such as those of the face and a greater orateness of *makuṭa* etc., besides the more developed

or newer ornaments like the presence of the pendent string on both the shoulders. Hence its attribution to this period. The *padmāsana* is, however, specially noteworthy. In view of these, this may be assigned to the beginning of the last quarter of the 12th century A.D.

The Pārvatī (or Śivakāmasundarī) from Śivapuram may also be assigned to the same period on grounds of style which is seen to be almost identical with that of the above figure. Of the details, especially noteworthy are the beautiful *bhaṅga*, the full and well-modelled breasts, the beautifully swaying *yajñopavīta*, the drapery with folds suggested by fine lines and the two finely depicted hanging ends of waist-band seen on each thigh. The last mentioned detail characterises the figure sculptures especially of the west *gopura*, attributable to the period under discussion, of the Chidambaram temple. Fig. 228

The Somāskanda from the temple of Vaittīśvaraṇ-kovil in the Tanjore District seems to be another beautiful example of the art, belonging to the last quarter of the 12th century A.D. All the three figures forming this group are excellently modelled and are of beautiful proportions. Śiva is majestically seated and his finely worked *jaṭā-makuṭa*, ornaments and poses of hands are superbly delineated. Umā's posture is equally well executed and the noteworthy features of this figure are the *keśa-makuṭa*, the full breasts, the beautiful posture of the left arm and prominent wheel designs on the drapery. The *utkuṭikāsana* pose is also very natural. Both these figures have the shoulder ornament on either side. The figure of the little Skanda is also interesting. Instead of the usual erect or slightly dancing form in which he is shown in Somāskanda figures, here he is dancing in the *catura* mode, with the right leg slightly lifted up and the left arm shown in the *daṇḍa-hasta* fashion. The hair is arranged as *keśa-makuṭa* fashion and the other features are beautiful. The back view of this group is interesting as it shows the hanging strands of hair on the back of the neck worked in the ancient style. The *āsanas* are interesting, and the *bhadrāsana* is to be specially noted because its lower-most moulding contains the peculiar decoration in the form of a series of lotus petals. This is met with for the first time here and it becomes a characteristic of the same *āsana* of a majority of bronzes of later periods. Fig. 229 Fig. 230

The figure representing Vīṇādhara [1], height 66 *cm*, from Vaḍaraṅgam, Tanjore District may be examined now. It stands in *tri-bhaṅga* pose which is obviously graceful. Its workmanship is simple and the details are clear-cut. This style of workmanship is characteristic of the bronzes of this period. Though the *jaṭā-makuṭa* is high, the emblems on it are not conspicuous. The face is definitely oval and its features are bold. A number of sculptures of the east *gopura* of the Chidambaram temple may be seen to possess similar facial features as well as the finish of this bronze. Then there are the Fig. 231

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 108.

thick necklaces of the type met with in sculptures and bronzes of this period. The treatment of the other details such as the *yajñopavīta* is beautiful. Especially noteworthy is the shoulder ornament. There is the usual string on the right shoulder. But it is the strand of hair with three twists in its tip treated in a superb fashion that is most pleasing. The treatment of the arms and their disposition are likewise well done ; the fingers of the hands, particularly those of the two lower hands, suggesting the playing on the *vīṇā*, being rendered as if throbbing with life. The armlets show foliated heads which are exquisite.

The style of the legs will be found to be akin to that of the Somāskanda (Fig. 229) examined above which shows a smooth tapering down with a slight emphasis on the knee-caps. This loin-cloth is decorated with "a single row of rather widely spaced wheels, with an additional pair, slightly larger and more conspicuous, at a higher level on the most prominent part of the buttocks". (*Catalogue*, p. 108). The sashes are simple but the *simha-mukha* clasp in front is interesting because of the developed loops emanating from its sides and of the rosette-like pendant from which hangs a long beaded string which is attached to the left thigh. Another interesting feature is the beaded cord that hangs low in a broad loop on the left side and a similar but shorter one on the right side. Further, the manner in which the border of the loin-cloth is done is also noteworthy as its hem is beaded.

The *padmāsana* of this bronze may be seen to be akin to that of the above Somāskanda with its petals indicated by inconspicuous lines. The *bhadrāsana* is very simple.

It is necessary to refer to the nipples of this figure which are rather prominent. In none of the bronzes noticed above have we come across this feature ; but quite a number of bronzes belonging to later periods, to be examined below, show this prominently. The occurrence of this feature in this bronze may simply be taken to prove the beginnings of it here. If it is not for its excellent modelling, restrained decoration and the charming posture, this bronze may have to be assigned to a later period. In view of the similarity of its style to that of the above mentioned Chidambaram sculptures, this may also be dated to about the last quarter of the 12th century A.D.

At this juncture two interesting bronzes require consideration on account of their style. They are a trident with the representation of Śiva as Pradoshamūrti (or Āliṅganamūrti) in front, from Tirunelveli, Tanjore District and a *Nandi* which should have originally formed a part of the group of Śiva as Vṛishabhavāhana from Tiruvānmiyūr, Chingleput District.

Fig. 232 Though the trident is merely an emblem of Śiva, its conception and execution are apparently of a high order. The beauty of the semi-circular prongs of which the lines flow in a rhythmic manner and of which the tips taper in a graceful fashion is enhanced by the prong in the middle, which, though erect, is relieved of its monotony in

a clever but artistic way by the two diamond designs introduced in it. The bottom of the trident is equally well designed and the proportions of its mouldings are simply grand.

Coming to the miniature Pradoshamūrti group, apparently the *sthapati* had not spared any efforts in delineating the figures of Śiva and Pārvatī not only according to the rules of canons but also as beautiful specimens of art and a fine composition at that. A glance at the figure of Śiva will show that its style is almost completely identical with that of the Vīṇādhara examined above, including the *tri-bhaṅga* pose. Though the Pārvatī figure is less clear enough, its details which are seen, show it to be charming. That the *sthapati* was a remarkable man, one who was capable of making such minor works of his, too, like this trident, gems of art, is proved by the exquisite sketches of foliage on either side of the Pradoshamūrti group.

The *Nandi* from Tiruvānmiyūr, Chingleput District, is equally interesting from the Fig. 233
point of view of modelling and decorative details which include the three bands with bells shown round the neck, below the hump and at the back and the seat on the back which is tied by a ribbon with the knot prominently shown on this side and the *kiṅkiṇīs* on all the four legs. Each pair of legs is made to stand on an *āsana* shaped as a double lotus. The other interesting detail of this quaint bronze are the face with the tongue shown as if licking the left nostril, the fat hump with its muscles indicated by a deep curl and the tail of which the hairy tip is shown entwined to the right hind leg. Of all its features the pose of *Nandi* is majestic. The expression on the face portrays clearly the bovine innocence. Above, another *Nandi* belonging to the Vṛishabhavāhana group (Fig. 67) from Taṇḍantoṭṭam has been noticed. When compared with that, the *Nandi* under discussion, will be seen to suffer much. Nevertheless, that it is much better than those belonging to later periods will be evident when it is compared with the *Nandi* of the Vṛishabhavāhana group from Vedāraṇyam.[1] Just as in the case of other *Nandis* this is also probably made according to the hollow cast process.

The Naṭeśa belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam may be examined now. The Fig. 234
most glaring detail of the figure, namely the *prabhā* has assumed almost a perfect circular form and there are twenty-seven flames in it. Each of the flames except the crowning one, shows five tongues. The top-most flame shows clearly six tongues although there must be one more which is but slightly indicated on the proper left side. It may be mentioned here that the flames of the *prabhās* of Naṭeśas and of many other figures belonging to subsequent periods show five tongues except in a few cases, as for instance the dated Naṭeśa from Belūr (Fig. 294) to be discussed below, where their

[1] O. C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*, Pl. XCIV.

number is four although even in that the crowning flame has obviously seven tongues. The next detail is the feathery crown. It no doubt has two rows of feathers one above the other but their fan-wise arrangement and subdued treatment are noteworthy. The double row arrangement of feathers is found in almost all the Naṭeśas beginning from the Naṭeśa (Fig. 137) in the Big Temple at Tanjore, although such Naṭeśas as from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu and Puñjai show only a single row. Further, its top is connected to the *prabhā* only by a metal piece and it is clearly removed from the *prabhā*, a feature which characterises almost all the later Naṭeśas. The treatment of the whirling locks of hair is noteworthy. A set of seven locks is seen on either side. Each one of the *jaṭās* is done in a wavy form which is pleasing; and its end is depicted as prominent ringlet which is artistic. Interlinking of the *jaṭās* by vertical rows of metal pieces, four on the right side and five on the left side is seen. A noteworthy feature of the arrangement of the *jaṭās* is that they do not show any looping although it has been noticed on either side in the Naṭeśa from the Big Temple, Tanjore and on the right side alone in the Naṭeśa (Fig. 196) from Tiruppanandāḷ. The other interesting detail seen on the *jaṭās* is the figure of *Gaṅgā*.

The face is round and its features indicate a family resemblance to those of the Naṭeśa in the Amsterdam Museum.[1] The expression is one of supreme tranquillity. Among the ornaments, all of which are boldly depicted, the long *hāra* and the elbow ornament which has become stylised are noteworthy. The *udara-bandha* too is interesting on account of its rope-like twisting but pleasing pair of flowing ends in wavy form. That the modelling is somewhat heavy is easily seen by the treatment of the torso and the arms. While the arms in general are modelled in an effective manner, there is a slight distortion in the lines of the arm in the *gaja-hasta* pose. Moreover, the hand of this arm is also not done as it ought to be. The other hands are charming, especially the hand which holds the drum in a graceful fashion and the hand in the *abhaya* pose.

The most beautiful part of this bronze is the legs. Though the knee-caps are as usual emphasised yet this has not marred even to a slightest extent the beautifully tapering lines of the legs which culminate in the tips of the toes especially of the lifted up left foot. It must be mentioned here that the treatment of this foot alone when compared with that of the same foot of Naṭeśa (Fig. 238) from Puṅganūr, to be dealt with below, will show that the latter bronze is unmistakably later than the former. The figure of Apasmāra has become comparatively small but its features are realistic. The treatment of the *padmāsana* may be seen to be akin to that of the Naṭeśa from Tiruppanandāḷ in both of which petals are subdued and the grooves are not prominent and the

[1] *The Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 52, Fig. 311; and *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, cover page figure and reproduction on p. 82.

shape of the lower row of petals is cup-like. This may therefore be assigned to the fourth quarter of the 12th century A.D.

The Rāma group[1], from Tirukkaḍaiyūr, Tanjore District, is one of the finest of its kind. The modelling of the Rāma and Lakshmaṇa may be found to be akin to that of the Rāma from Maṇakkāl (Fig. 225) but there is considerable difference between them in the treatment of the details. This is exemplified by the wave pattern of the shorts-like garment of these figures, by the clearly worked *simha-mukha* clasp and by the two artistic ends of waist-cord attached to each thigh of the two figures. Further the headdress of Lakshmaṇa though of *keśa-makuṭa* type is obviously much nearer a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*. The most interesting detail met with in the Rāma is the mole-like thing on the right chest, a detail not met with in the images of Rāma discussed above. Obviously it represents *Śrīvatsa*; and its presence in this bronze denotes apparently the complete identification of Rāma with Vishṇu. It may be remembered here the fact that during the 12th century A.D. the whole of Tamilnāḍ was reverberating with the verses from the immortal Tamil Rāmāyaṇa of the great poet Kambaṇ, where the deification of Rāma is complete. It is but natural that the ideas of this *mahā-kavi* have influenced to a great degree the religious thoughts during that period, which got embodied in works of art as well. This Rāma set may therefore be said to be a product of this influence, and in some of the later-day bronzes, representing the theme, this idea is perpetuated. Fig. 235

Coming to the figure of Sītā, though it partakes of some of the features like modelling and poses present in the Sītā from Maṇakkāl (Fig. 227), in decorative details it differs much from the latter. The most conspicuous amongst them is the headdress which has assumed *makuṭa* form here while in the Maṇakkāl Sītā, it has retained the traditional *dhammilla* form. Besides, the big *patra-kuṇḍalas*, the beautifully modelled breasts, the tasteful *channavīra*, the prominent shoulder ornament on either side, the refined drapery with the characteristic double ends of waist-cord seen attached to each thigh and the *bhaṅga* are other interesting points to be noted in this figure. All the three figures stand each on a *padmāsana* executed beautifully. On the basis of the style this group may be dated to about the end of the 12th century A.D. The small figure of Hanumān is a later addition.

The Naṭeśa, ht. 112 *cm*, from Veḷḷāḷagaram in the Māyūram Taluk of the Tānjore District next calls our attention. Its modelling, details and proportions are all excellently dealt with and it therefore has a classical appearance. But, it is the highly ornate *jaṭās*, the slender stomach-band, the *kiṅkiṇī*-tied anklets, the holding of the *ḍamaru* by a single finger alone and above all the *prabhā*, though beautiful in shape and style, showing as many as forty-one flames each with five tongues except the one at the top which seems to Fig. 236

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 81.

have provision for seven tongues, that determine the position of the bronze in our scheme. The stylised *pādasaras* are to be noted as they are quite different from those of earlier Naṭeśas showing the individual *kiṅkiṇīs* clearly. The *prabhā* also has the perforated part as the smaller Naṭeśa from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 216). The workmanship of the double-tier feathery crown, and that of the *Gaṅgā* and of the flame of fire held by the upper left hand is beautiful. The smiling expression in the face is splendidly delineated. This is, therefore, a masterpiece of the art of this period and it may be assigned to round about 1200 A.D.

Fig. 237 The Somāskanda group now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London, is another noteworthy specimen. The Śiva is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose and has a high *jaṭā-makuṭa* possessing indistinct emblems. Its modelling is superb. The details to be noted in this are the beautiful little deer, perched on the first two fingers of the upper left hand, the looped string besides the usual pendant on each shoulder, the very telling *āhūya-varada* pose of the lower left hand, the simple waist-band, the festoons depicted on the shorts and the anklets besides the *pādasaras*. The Umā figure too is excellently modelled and the details that are interesting in it are the tall *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the *utpala* in the right hand, the beautiful *varada* pose of the left hand, the beautiful breasts, the thick series of bangles on the wrists and a similar series of anklets on the ankles. The manner of depicting the *sāri* as seen in the hanging left leg is a new feature met with for the first time here. The expression in both the figures is sublime. The baby Skanda is highly proportionately modelled and is shown in the *sama-bhaṅga* pose. This figure is executed with skill as evidenced by the restrained decoration and smoothly flowing lines. This group may be assigned to the beginning of the 13th century A.D., owing to the occurrence of the above mentioned new decorative details.

Fig. 238 Now we take up the Naṭeśa [1], ht. 64 *cm*, from Puṅganūr in the Tanjore District for examination. The authors of the *Catalogue* have said that it is of Choḷa type and that it comes very near the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu Naṭeśa in poise and even surpasses it in some other respects (p. 113). No doubt the head portion and the lower left arm in the *gaja-hasta* pose are excellently delineated. The two tiers of feathers on the crown are remarkably realistic, the fine whirling locks of hair flowing on either side are artistic, the *Gaṅgā* on the proper right and the balancing design on the opposite side are tasteful and the features of the face are full of charm and realism. But the other arms and their hands, the strained lines of the sides, the angular modelling of the legs and the highly stiff and ornate decorative details have made the figure more a standardised one rather than a bronze noted for life-like representation. In addition to these, the stylised elbow ornament, the not quite satisfactorily done three-tongued flame held in the

[1] *Catalogue*, pp. 111-12, Pl. XVI, Fig. 1.

upper left hand, the prominent wheel designs on the shorts and the stylized *pādasaras* are also in the nature of confirming the above impression. That the manner of holding the drum is also an innovation of the peirod has been seen above. Above all, there are the stiff anklets with *kiṅkiṇī* on the anklets, which are the unmistakable characteristic of the bronzes of the period. The Apasmāra is also not well executed. Neither is the *āsana* clearly worked.

The back view helps us to know the position of the bronze better. The *śiraś-cakra* is ornate, the strands of hair falling on the neck are bound by a ring, *yajñopavīta* is not only stiff but shows unnatural curving, each of the buttocks bears a single big wheel design which is purely of the nature of patterning and the inartistic manner of lifting of the left leg is apparent. On these grounds this bronze may be assigned to the beginning of the 13th century A.D. Fig. 239

The beautiful seated Umā belonging to the Big Temple, Tanjore may be said to belong to this period. Its noteworthy features are the beautiful posture, the exceedingly well modelled torso with beautiful breasts, the finely delineated folds on the stomach, the beautiful drapery with folds and the splendid poses of the arms. The ornaments are of the usual type, but it may be mentioned here the fact that only a single pendent string is seen on each shoulder. Thus this is a good specimen of the art, except for a slight plumpy modelling. The *āsanas* are as usual not quite well designed. Fig. 240

The seated Kāḷī [1], ht. 44 *cm*, from Senniyanviḍudi, Tanjore District may have to be assigned to about the same period on account of the following:— Fig. 241

The *keśa-maṇḍala* is stylized, the facial features are characteristic of the bronzes of the period we are discussing, the ornaments are also typical of the period, the modelling not artistic, the lines of the sides of the torso are not flowing smoothly though the breasts are full, their nipples are prominent as in the figure of this period, the *simha-mukha* clasp and the festoons are stylised and there are the anklets characteristic of the period. Added to these, there is the very telling looped string on each shoulder which is unmistakably an innovation introduced by the *sthapatis* of the period. In spite of these, there is majesty in the pose and beauty in the expression of the face. The pedestal which is a *bhadrāsana* is typical of the period, and it bears an illegible inscription. The authors of the *Catalogue*, have, on the basis of "the general treatment and especially of the bows of the girdle" (p. 122) have considered this to be of Chola type. They go on to say: "The inscription, most of which is unfortunately illegible, even after electrolytic treatment, in Tamil characters of the early Chola period." (*Ibid.*).

1 *Catalogue*, pp. 122-23, Pl. XVI, Fig. 1.

On the other hand owing to the above mentioned details characteristic of the art of the period and to the fact that we cannot lay much store on the extremely fragmentary inscription because of its being mostly illegible, this bronze may be assigned to the beginning of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 242 The bronze representing a king, over a foot high, probably Kulottuṅga III [1] (*circa* 1178–1218 A.D.) formerly in the Śiva temple at Kālahasti [2] in the Chittoor District but now in a private collection may be examined now. Extremely fortunately it bears on its pedestal an inscription which according to Mr. G. Venkoba Rao, the epigraphist is in characters of about the 13th century A.D. [3] a proposition accepted by Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan. The inscription is in two parts. "The first part . . . . . is a label 'Kulottuṅga-śōḷadevar' and the second part is a record of the dedication of the image to that temple by one Uḍaiya-Nambi." So the difficulty in dating this piece has been very much reduced by this inscription. The style of the bronze, appropriately enough, is characteristic of the period to which the inscription is assigned on the basis of its palaeography.

Prof. Sastri says the following about this: " . . . . the figure wears many ornaments and the face is expressive of youthful energy and eagerness. The image is important as perhaps the only authentic contemporary portrait of a Cōḷa monarch so far known." [4] But regarding his dating of the bronze expressed in the sentences " . . . . the image may have been made about the time of his accession," and " . . . . . its date its most probably somewhere about 1180," [5] it may be said that it is somewhat early.

The noteworthy details of this pretty little piece, are the curly hair in front, depicted in a manner very similar to that which is met with in the bronzes of Jñānasambanda, the thick cluster of necklaces, the prominent beaded strings on the shoulders, the stylized and not clearly worked *keyūras* and elbow ornaments, the ornate shorts and waist-bands and the anklets of three rings on the ankles. The *āsanas* too are beautiful, the petals of the *padmāsana* are in the traditional style. The *bhaṅga* of the figure is beautiful and the excellence of its conception is exemplified by the realistic rendering of the facial features and the smiling countenance. This may be attributed to the middle of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

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[1] T. G. Aravamuthan, *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, p. 41, Fig. 16; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op, cit.*, Fig. 33.

[2] *Catalogue*, p. 31.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 726.

[5] *Ibid.*

The beautiful little bronze from Tiruppurambiyam, Tanjore District may be found Fig. 243
to be almost akin to the above figure in style and decorative details. It is said to represent Koṭpuli-nāyanār. Though the modelling is not quite satisfactory as is evidenced by the angular elbows and somewhat disproportionate legs, this piece has a classical look about it. The interesting details of the figure are the thick set of *kaṇṭhīs*, curved object held by the hands in *añjali*, the wheel designs on the shorts and the anklets. This may be attributed to the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

The Naṭeśa now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London, is Fig. 244
another interesting specimen of the art of the period under discussion. The details specially to be noted here are the two-tier feather crown, the beautifully flowing ends of the stomach cloth, the holding of the *ḍamaru* by a single finger, the anklet on the right ankle only, the stylised *pādasaras* and the *prabhā* with thirty-one stylized flames, each possessing four tongues except the topmost one which has five tongues. The modelling is good, though as is characteristic of the works of the period, it is slightly heavy. The uplifted left leg is not executed satisfactorily although here the pose is not so bad as in the Puṅganūr Naṭeśa (Fig. 238). The square face with clear-cut details has a smiling expression which contributes to the excellence of the bronze. The Apasmāra and the pedestal on which he is depicted are not worked well. On these grounds, this bronze may be assigned to about the end of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

The remarkable group of Umāsahita from Kīḻaiyūr in the South Arcot District is an Fig. 245
interesting example of the art as obtained during this peiod. Each of them is seated on a *padmāsana*, and both of them might have had a common *bhadrāsana* which is now missing. In all probability they originally formed a Somāskanda group from which now the Skanda is missing. Of the two figures, that of Śiva, ht. 70 *cm*, shows superb finish and has a magnificence of its own. The perfection of its modelling is apparent from its head to foot; and the excellence of its workmanship is known from the tender and delicate treatment of the fingers especially those of the left hand which is in *āhūya-varada* pose. The one special characteristic of this marvellous piece, which at once enables one to fix its position, is the looped string on the left shoulder; the usual pendant is seen on the right shoulder.

The style of the figure of Umā, ht. 45 *cm*, is not good and this will be apparent when it is compared with that of the beautiful seated figure of Umā (Fig. 240) belonging to the Big Temple, Tanjore discussed above. The rather inartistically worked *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the somewhat atrophied breasts and the rather unnatural posture of the left arm go to show that the figure has not been done with the attention it deserved. The back view of Fig. 246
these figures confirm the above estimate. The double row of curly strands of hair falling on the back of Śiva and the imperfection noticed in the treatment of the left arm of

Umā are specially noteworthy in this side. Nevertheless, their stlye being characteristic of the bronzes of the period, they may also be dated to the end of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 247 The Ambikā group, a Jaina deity, from Siṅgāṇikkuppam, South Arcot District has features which require its examination here. This was found along with two beautiful standing Tīrthaṅkara figures one of which is discussed below. Ambikā, the chief figure of the group stands in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose on a beautiful *padmāsana* over a *bhadrāsana* which has a projection in front. She is resting her left hand on the head of a *cheṭi* or maid, also standing in the *tri-bhaṅga* pose and holding a beautiful *mālā* of lotus-flowers (?). There is a small boy resembling the baby Skanda of Somāskanda group on the right of Ambikā. The interesting details of Ambikā are the thick set of necklaces, the elbow ornament, the thick series of bangles, the loose drapery with flowing ends and bows on the sides and the beautifully looping sash possessing wide festoons and artistic tassels. Her posture is splendid; but the modelling is not good as is exemplified by the thick left arm and the atrophied breasts. The most interesting detail of this figure, and the one which distinguishes it as a Jaina icon, is the little seated Tīrthaṅkara figure on the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*. The maid looks somewhat prettier and it is due to the beautiful proportions as well as to the refined ornaments. The *kuṭila-kuntalas* above the forehead are noteworthy. The garland which she holds in her hands is worked in an exemplary manner. The boy is not particularly beautiful compared to the Skandas of the Somāskanda figures examined above. Nevertheless he shows all the characteristics of a figure of a baby of the period. This group may be dated to the beginning of the second quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 248 The bronzes representing the two most important emblems of Vishṇu, namely
Fig. 249 Kaumodakī (the *gadā*), ht. 54 *cm*, and the Sudarśana (the discus), ht. 55 *cm*, purchased locally in Madras, have all the features of the bronzes of this period. Besides, being representations of the Āyudha Purushas they are very valuable for the study of iconography of this kind of icons. The one important detail to be remembered here is the shoulder ornament seen on either shoulder in both the figures. They may also be assigned to the second quarter of the 13th century.

Fig. 250 The Naṭeśa, ht. 86 *cm*, from Kaṇkoḍuttavanitam, Tanjore District, may be examined here. It is no doubt a good specimen of the art of bronzes and a Naṭeśa noted for vigour. But owing to the evolved features and inartistic postures of the limbs it is not as charming as it ought to be. The manneristic headdress, the number of *jaṭās* and the stylistic manner of showing them, the exuberance noticed in the ornamentation, the unnatural bend of the hand of the arm in the *gaja-hasta* pose, the discrepancy noticed in the proportions between the parts above and below the waist, and the bending of the part

above the waist to front, instead of the usual majestic manner of showing the part as bending slightly to the back, all go to detract the otherwise well executed bronze. The other interesting detail of this is its *prabhā* which shows at its two bottom ends an incurving which does not at all add to the beauty of this detail. Further, owing to the crowding in it of thirty-nine flames each of five tongues except the one at the apex which has seven tongues, the *prabhā* has become ornate, and it has therefore lost all its ancient charm which lingered on even up to the Naṭeśa (Fig. 244) in the Victoria and Albert Museum, discussed above. The Apasmāra and the *padmāsana* are also not executed well. The other characteristic detail of the figure is the anklets the presence of which aids its dating. On these grounds this bronze may be dated to the middle of the second quarter of the 13th century A.D.

The highly ornate Pārvatī from Tiruveṭkaḷam near Chidambaram in the South Arcot District may also be attributed to this period. The ornaments and drapery of this figure are noteworthy. Though the limbs display some stiffness in modelling, yet the treatment of the figure is exquisite. In fact the modelling in general is beautiful, and this is exemplified by the excellent treatment of the hips and the breasts. It is the extreme mannerism noticed in the depiction of the cloth and the ornaments that gives a clue to its chronological position. The back view though displaying the novel manner of depicting the cord that connects the *channavīra* with the *kaṇṭhī*, shows defects in modelling of the left arm which is another proof for its age. This may be attributed to about the middle of the 13th century A.D. Fig. 251 Fig. 252

The Naṭeśa, ht. 153·3 *cm*, now in the Amsterdam Museum may also be attributed to the middle of the 13th century A.D. It is one of the biggest of its class and it therefore deserves all appreciation for the mastery of technique it displays. Recently it has been written upon twice by Mr. John Irwin, first in *The Art of India and Pakistan* (Pl. 52, No. 311), on p. 72 where its date is given as the 13th–14th century A.D., and then in *Mārg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, on pages 32 to 35 where its date is given as *circa* 13th century A.D. The latter journal carries four magnificent illustrations, including the one on the cover, of this bronze, which show three different views of it namely front, back and left sides. In both the above publications, a complete description of it is given, the one in the journal (p. 35) being fuller. In the article contributed to the journal, this is compared with the two other magnificent Naṭeśas belonging to the Madras Museum namely the one from Velāṅkaṇṇi (Fig. 117) and the other from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu (Fig. 164). Since Mr. Irwin's description of the bronze is almost classical, it is enough if we give here the reasons for our attribution of the bronze to about the middle of the 13th century, a dating, though, more precise, as is usual with us, than the other way of dating by centuries, which is found to agree more or less with the date of 13th century given to it after careful consideration by Mr. Irwin. He says: "Certain features of the Amsterdam Naṭarāja, such as the more

formalised treatment of the aureole of flames and the flowing locks of hair suggest that it is undoubtedly the latest of the three. At the same time, there is a vitality in the figure itself and a freshness of vision in the modelling which clearly link it with the Chola tradition and caution any attempt to date it later than 1300 A.D." [1]

Our reasons are as follows: The *prabhā*, though, as required by the huge size of the figure, is large, yet because of the presence on it as many as forty-seven flames each of five tongues makes it more stylised than that of the Kaṅkoḍuttavanitam Naṭeśa (Fig. 250) discussed above; and this is a special characteristic feature of the Naṭeśas of this period. Then there is the thin string tied round the right calf. The bounding of the strands of hair hanging on the back of the neck is a third feature. The double row of feathers on the crown and the manner of attaching it to the *prabhā* is the fourth detail. Too much of projection in front seen in the lifted up leg-which is also lifted up higher than is necessary-and the arm in *gaja-hasta* pose is a fifth item of detail. All these characteristics go to show that it has its place some years later than that of the Kaṅkoḍuttavanitam bronze; and hence its attribution to about the middle of the 13th century. In later-day Naṭeśas these details become further developed as we shall see below.

The estimate of the quality of its workmanship as compared with that of the other two Naṭeśas, given in the above mentioned journal by Mr. Irwin is as follows: "From the point of view of style, the Amsterdam Naṭarāja differs from the other two figures in the naturalistic emphasis of the modelling. This is achieved not only by a more studied attention to surface detail, but also by a sharper definition of contours, which gives the effect of greater compactness and thereby of more surface tension. The contrast is most noticeable when comparing the three figures from behind, particularly the shoulder-blades, the waists, the round contours of the buttocks, and such anatomical details as the knee-joints and the ankles." [2] A word about this estimate may be said here.

Instead of being a more naturalistic one than the other two figures in modelling, that it suffers from less naturalistic modelling than the other two, is evident not only from the too much of projection introduced in the left leg and lower left arm but also from the part above the waist being comparatively shorter than the part below it. Further, from the back view of this Naṭeśa it is seen that the depiction of the outstretching of the left arm is quite unnatural compared with that met with in the other two figures. Besides, the modelling of the arms and legs as seen from this side, leaves much to be desired especially when compared with that of the other two figures. Thus in every respect, except for its size, this Naṭeśa is seen to lag behind the other two Naṭeśas. Mr. Irwin is not unaware of this and in fact his views in the matter are full

[1] *Marg*, Vol. IV, No. 2, p. 33.
[2] *Ibid.*

of meaning. He says: "Few people would prefer the Amsterdam Naṭarāja to the famous example from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu which has lost its aureole of flames and flowing hair. There is a more even flow of rhythm in the latter figure and on the whole a more subtle adjustment of the planes to one another." (*Mārg*, *ibid.*, p. 35). And we are in complete agreement with Mr. Irwin's statement about the technical excellence of the Amsterdam Naṭeśa namely: "Judged, however, as a technical feat of casting, there is no doubt that the Amsterdam Naṭarāja is the most remarkable of the three, especially when we take into account not only the size but the depth". (*Ibid.*)

The Somāskanda in the Śiva temple at Kunnaṇḍār-kovil in the former Pudukkottai State (now merged with the Tiruchirappalli District), though attributable to the same period as the above, has several features which are characteristic of the sculptures of the locality. Amongst them mention may be made of the peculiar manner of depiction of the *jaṭā-makuṭa* of Śiva, the narrow torso and thick-set limbs. The prominent ornament on the calf of the right leg is noteworthy. Umā is also modelled in a similar fashion but the breasts are worked in the usual traditional manner. The elbow ornament shows the projecting end prominently which is noteworthy. Each of them is seated on a separate and high *padmāsana* of which the workmanship is beautiful. The *padmāsanas* are cast together with the *bhadrāsana* possessing simple mouldings. The baby Skanda standing behind his parents, is certainly of better workmanship than the boy belonging to the Jaina Ambikā group (Fig. 247) discussed above. On the whole, in spite of the strong imprints of the local tradition, this group of bronzes has also qualities of a work of sculpture of the period, and it may therefore be assigned to the third quarter of the 13th century A.D. Fig. 253

The standing Durgā, ht. 40 *cm*, from Māriyūr in the Arantangi Taluk of the Tanjore District, is another noteworthy example. Its special qualities are the tall and slender but beautiful modelling, the simple emblems of *cakra* and *śaṅkha*, the thick wave pattern suggesting heavy folds of the drapery, the peculiar shape of the loop of the sash, the beautifully hanging ends of waist-cords seen attached to the legs, and the thick series of bangles on the wrists and anklets on the legs. Interestingly a parrot is perched on the wrist of the lower left arm, as in some of the early Choḷa Durgā stone sculptures. The *āsanas* are also well made, and the whole figure with the pedestals is seen to be marked by good proportions and delicacy of treatment, in spite of the erasure of the facial features due to corrosion. This may be assigned to about the last quarter of the 13th century A.D. Fig. 254

The Gaṇeśa from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District may be said to belong to the same period. Its noteworthy details are the naturalistic animal face combined to an equally naturalistic human body, the shorts with grooves suggesting heavy folds, the flowing Fig. 255

bows and ends of cloth seen on either side, the anklets on the legs and the *padmāsana* of thick petals over *bhadrāsana*. The latter *āsana* is noteworthy not only for its sharp edges, but also for the lotus petal design carved along the upper part of the bottom moulding. A beginning of this decoration of the pedestal has already been noticed in the Somāskanda (Fig. 229) from Vaittīśvaraṇ-kovil.

Fig. 256 The beautiful Somāskanda group now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, is a splendid example of the art. Except for the facial features which are akin to those of the Somāskanda from Kunnāṇḍār-kovil (Fig. 253), in other respects this group may be found to be similar to the Umāsahita from Kīḻaiyūr (Fig. 245) discussed above. The looped string on the left shoulder of Śiva, and the atrophied breasts of Pārvatī are especially noteworthy in this connection. The baby Skanda is also beautiful and the manner of showing his *keśa* spread out fan-wise on either side is beautiful. This group may also be attributed to the last quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 257 The Naṭeśa in the Śiva temple at Ūṭṭāttūr in the Tiruchirappalli District is another excellent example of the art. Its details including the beautiful circular aureole with thirty-six flames and decorated with *makara*-heads at either of its ends very much resemble those of the Amsterdam Naṭeśa discussed above (p. 323). But here they are found at a slightly more advanced stage of development as can be seen from the beautiful *kiṅkiṇī*-attached string round the right calf, the artistic way of balancing the *Gaṅgā* by introducing a jumping serpent on the left *jaṭās* and somewhat projecting out left leg. The modelling and rendering of the facial features seem to be superior to those of the Amsterdam Naṭeśa. This may be attributed to the closing years of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 258 The last item of bronze to be attributed to the fag end of the later Choḻa period is the beautiful Pārvatī in the Jambukeśvara temple at Tiruvāṇaikkāval in the Tiruchirappalli District. Its classical modelling, simplicity of embellishments, the beautiful rhythm of lines and the splendid pose are apparent even at a slight glance at it. Indeed if it is not for the slight sharpness of the features and manneristic delineation of the drapery, this might as well be worthy of the earlier schools discussed above. The *āsanas* are also well executed.

The select examples of the art belonging to the later Choḻa period, examined above, show clearly the remarkable advancement that the art had made then. Not only was the technical excellence of the earlier periods maintained but it may be said to have been perfected as exemplified by such outstanding specimens of the art as the Amsterdam Naṭeśa and the Rāma and Sītā (Figs. 225-27) from Maṇakkāl. Besides continuing the themes which were in vogue during earlier periods, new themes like those of the saints were also chosen for representation. In fact it was during this period that the art of portraiture

in bronze began to be practised, of which the excellent examples are the Choḷa King (Fig. 206) and the Kulottuṅga Choḷa III (Fig. 242). The existence of a number of interesting Buddhist bronzes and the beautiful Jaina Ambikā (Fig. 247) from Siṅgāṇikkuppam testify to the popularity of the art amongst the followers of all the sects and religions. But the number of bronzes representing Hindu themes being large, it is clear that Hinduism was reigning supreme then. Even here, bronzes belonging to Śaivism being comparatively larger in number than those of Vaishṇavism, it is easily seen that Śaivism enjoyed a wide popularity as in the previous periods. As has been said above, the representations of certain themes containing new but significant elements throw light on the development of religious ideas during the period. This is exemplified by the introduction of the *Śrīvatsa* symbol on the right chest of Rāmas as for instance the Rāma (Fig. 235) from Tirukkaḍaiyūr.

That the traditions of the art were not static but were undergoing significant changes is known from the varieties of ways in which such subsidiary details as the *āsanas*, *prabhās* and the jewellery are made, and the anatomical features are represented. The development of the *prabhās* during this period can be easily seen from the *prabhās* of Naṭeśas. Besides, during this period, such new details as the looped string on the left shoulder, the anklets on both ankles, and the *kiṅkiṇī*-attached calf ornament of Naṭeśas have been brought into existence. Owing to the fact that conventionalisation began to set in then, gradually the naturalism that characterised the modelling and other details of the bronzes of earlier periods was disappearing from the bronzes of this period as is evidenced by the sharp facial features, the angularities of the limbs, the stiff ornaments and the unimaginatively depicted poses.

Notwithstanding the above defects, there is no gainsaying of the fact that it was during this period that countless examples of bronzes seem to have been produced, of which those examined form only an insignificantly small number. Another fact to be remembered here is that though, as usual a great majority of bronzes are from the Tanjore District, yet the examples that have come from such places as Kālahasti and Salem show the wide prevalence of the traditions of the art during period. It is, however, interesting to note, that these traditions did not remain the same in all the localities of this wide region, significant variations being introduced in such aspects of the art as modelling by local schools as is evidenced by the Somāskanda (Fig. 253) from Kunnāṇḍār-kovil in the former Pudukkottai State and the Vīṇādhara (Fig. 209) from Pudūr East in the Salem District. This tendency seems to have become very marked during the subsequent periods with the result amongst the bronzes belonging to these periods quite a few distinct regional groups can be easily distinguished. In fact some of the schools, such as the one belonging to Āndhradeśa, seem to have been active from an earlier period

examples belonging to which are known from that region. They seem to have had a vigorous existence till about 1400 A.D. from which date they appear to have been once again influenced by the unifying force of the Vijayanagar empire. The most important of these regional schools are the later Pāṇḍyan, the Ceylonese and the Andhra. Below we shall examine a few select examples of the art of bronzes created by each of these schools during the period beginning from about 1100 A.D. and ending about 1400 A.D.

LATER PĀṆḌYA BRONZES

This school may be said to have been active in the ancient Pāṇḍyan territory now divided into the three Districts of Maḍurai, Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli. Very few bronzes belonging to this region and dating from periods earlier than the 12th century A.D. have been known. But quite a few bronzes belonging to periods after that date are known. This is due mainly to historical circumstances. From about the 12th century A.D. the Choḷa power began to wane due to the fact that the Pāṇḍyas began to be more and more powerful and tried to expand their sovereignty over the whole of Tamil-nāḍ. They did succeed in their attempts but it happened only in the 13th century. After this, for about a century or two and till it was superseded by the Vijayanagar rulers, this later Pāṇḍyan dynasty was more or less supreme in Tamil-nāḍ. As usual, the members of this royal dynasty too were patrons of art and religion. This is proved by the temples and *gopuras* that they constructed in almost all the important religious centres, containing innumerable sculptures and bronzes and paintings. So, the works of art especially of bronzes belonging to the period under discussion are found to hail from different parts of Tamil-nāḍ, not merely from the ancient Pāṇḍyan territory. This school seems to have survived for a long time after the extinction of the Pāṇḍyan dynasty as such. But since its later-day creations show marked influences of the traditions of the art as obtained during the Vijayanagar period, they are dealt with further on under that heading.

One of the earliest examples of the art is the standing Vishṇu[1] from Sermādevi in the Tirunelveli District. It is 3 feet 2 inches high and is said to be "the largest South Indian bronze of Vishṇu known."[2] It is a beautiful specimen of the art. But its large size showing mastery of technique, in which respect, it may be compared to such large bronzes as the Naṭeśa in the Amsterdam Museum (p. 323 above), the exuberant drapery, the inartistic sway of the *yajñopavīta* and above all the presence of the ornament on both shoulders the one on the left shoulder being looped, suggest that the bronze belongs to about the end of the 12th century A.D.

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 77.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 783.

The bronze representing Śrīdevī[1] from the same place probably formed a group with the above Vishṇu. If so, the details of this figure such as anklets, the conical *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* and the tenor of workmanship in general which show that the bronze belongs to the end of the 12th century A.D., may be said to assist in the dating of the above Vishṇu. In both of them, it must be mentioned here, the two *āsanas* which are moulded together, are well worked. The provision of a bracket on either side of the *āsana* of the Vishṇu is noteworthy.

The bronze representing a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara said to have been obtained somewhere near Śivagaṅga in the Ramanathapuram District may also be attributed to this period. The Jina is seated in the *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* on a simple but nicely finished high *bhadrāsana*. Being almost nude, only the modelling of the figure has to be relied upon for its dating. The figure is excellently modelled and the proportions are beautiful. The face is of the slightly protruding type; but the expression, as is expected in a representation of the theme, displays inner composure and self-absorption. Fig. 259

Behind the figure is the back of the *āsana* behind which are two chauri-bearers, one on each side. Their decorations, poses and modelling are in the characteristic style of the art as was in vogue round about 1200 A.D. On these stylistic grounds this bronze may be attributed to about 1200 A.D.

The seated Vishṇu, ht. 50 *cm*, from Sermādevi[2] is an interesting specimen of this school. Its special features are the hand poses which are similar to those of the Śiva (Fig. 245) from Kīḻaiyūr, the presence of looped string on both the shoulders which is different from that of the same Śiva from Kīḻaiyūr where it is present on the left shoulder only, the thick garment with sets of triple-lines running parallel to one another with small flower designs in between two of them and the prominent double-ring anklets resembling those of the Śiva of the Somāskanda group (Fig. 253) from Kunnāṇḍārkovil. But the modelling and expression are beautiful. On the above grounds, this bronze may be dated to the middle of the 13th century A.D. Fig. 260

The standing figure of Pārvatī belonging to the Kuttālanāthasvāmin temple of Kuttālam in the Tirunelveli District, is one of the remarkable creations of the later Pāṇḍyan school. Except for the slight defect in the modelling of the left arm which is known from the unnatural curve it takes at the elbow, this figure is noted for good proportions, restrained decoration and fine modelling which is evidenced by that of the hips, for that matter, by the part below the waist and by that of the full breasts. The *tribhaṅga* in which it stands is charming and the pose of the right hand holding the *utpala* Fig. 261

[1] *Ibid.*, Fig. 79.
[2] *Catalogue*, p. 67, No. 19.

adds to the charm. The other noteworthy details of the figure are the fine looped strings on both shoulders and the round-topped *keśa-bandha* on the head. This method of dressing up of the hair seems to be a characteristic of the traditions of this school. The pedestals are obviously stiff and less clearly worked. This may also be attributed to the middle of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 262 The Umāsahita[1], ht. 43 *cm*, from Tanjore District is an example of this school from the Choḷa country. The details such as the peculiar *jaṭā-makuṭa* of Śiva and conical *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of Umā, the looped string on the shoulders of both figures, and the prominent anklets are the unmistakable characteristics of the traditions of this school. The bracket-like detail present on either side of the *āsana* may be said to have been derived from that of the Vishṇu from Sermādevi discussed above (p. 329). On these grounds this figure may be assigned to the beginning of the 14th century A.D.

Fig. 263 The Pradoshamūrti from Tiruvāymūr in the Tanjore District may be attributed to the same period, on stylistic grounds.

Fig. 264 The little Jñānasambanda, from Lālpeṭ in the South Arcot District is an excellent representation of the baby saint. Its modelling is superb; proportions are beautiful, headdress is fine and the poses of the hands are realistic. The slight *tribhaṅga* posture is consummately delineated. The only ornaments such as the ring around the neck with a trident-like pendant flanked by a tooth-like piece on either side, the beaded armlets and the simple anklets are tastefully worked and they enhance the
Fig. 265 beauty of the figure tenfold. The back view shows interesting details like the strands of hair on the back of the neck, the pendant nibbling amidst them and the two *kiṅkiṇīs* of the waist-cord. The *āsana* however is rather stylised which is a characteristic of the art of the period. This piece may be assigned to the middle of the 14th century.

Fig. 266 The standing Mahāvīra from Siṅgāṇikkuppam, South Arcot District, is a beautiful specimen of the art. Its proportions are good and workmanship is smooth and pleasing. In several respects it may be found to be similar to the seated Tīrthaṅkara (Fig. 259) from Śivagaṅga. But such details as the modelling of the arms and the manner in which they are joined to the shoulder seem to be manneristic. Besides, the pedestal has certainly become conventionalised showing broad lotus petal designs on its lowermost moulding too. On these grounds this bronze may also be attributed to the middle of the 14th century A.D.

Fig. 267 The Naṭeśa, ht. 95 *cm*, from Koṇḍavittāntiḍal, Tanjore District may be taken as a product of this school. The details of this figure such as the perforated *prabhā* with

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 105, No. 3.

forty-two flames each with five tongues except the top-most one showing seven flames, the inartistically spread-out *jaṭās* and the imperfectly modelled legs showing shrinking of the muscles about the knees and the anklets tied high up on the calf are certainly characteristics of the period. On these grounds this may be assigned to the last quarter of the 14th century A.D.

The standing Vishṇu [1] and Śrīdevī [2] from Sermādevi, probably forming a group may be assigned to the end of the 14th century on the basis of the stylised drapery of both figures, the presence of a single-ring anklets in Vishṇu and anklets consisting of a thick series of rings in Śrīdevī, and the stylised *āsanas*. The modelling of Śrīdevī is interesting not only because it is akin to that of the Umā of the Somāskanda group (Fig. 253) from Kunnāṇḍār-kovil, but also because a number of bronzes representing goddesses produced by this school during subsequent periods are also characterised by similar modelling showing that this is a special feature of the traditions of the school.

The bronzes examined above show certain innovations in modelling and decorative details which are peculiar to this school only, as for instance, the Pārvatī (Fig. 261) from Kuttālam and the Śrīdevī from Sermādevi illustrate the new style of modelling. The *kirīṭa* of seated Vishṇu (Fig. 260) from the same place and the *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* of the above mentioned Śrīdevī are specimens of a new type of decoration. Moreover, the provision of brackets for pedestals met with in some of the bronzes is also another innovation. The huge size of the Vishṇu from Sermādevī brings out the fact that the school was well versed in the technique too. Though they are marked by such special details, they preserve the classical qualities of the art to a considerable extent. This is well borne out by the large Vishṇu from Sermādevi and the Pārvatī (Fig. 261) from Kuttālam. The existence of Jaina bronzes show that the religion continued to exist during this period and that rituals in the Jaina shrines required them as those in the case of Hindu temples. It is therefore clear that, though the number of bronzes of this school known so far is small, it does not seem to have lagged behind the schools that existed earlier in the Choḷa country either in technical proficiency or in aesthetic vision. Since the ancient Pāṇḍyan territory has not been explored with an eye on this so much as the other parts of Tamil-nāḍ, there exists this paucity of early examples. But the discovery of the early Pāṇḍyan Naṭeśa (Fig. 54) at Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi in the Tirumaṅgalam Taluk of the Madurai District and the existence of the later Pāṇḍyan bronzes discussed just above in the various temples in the territory show clearly that a concerted search for such works of art will be fruitful.

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, Fig. 78.
[2] *Ibid.*, Fig. 80.

BRONZES OF THE SCHOOL OF CEYLON

Since Ceylon has been the next-door neighbour to Tamilnāḍ, there has been an active intercourse between the two countries throughout the ages. Naturally in cultural matters, as in other aspects of life, the refined influences of one country were felt by the other. Cultural contacts like this seem to have been great when the intercourse between the two countries was strong and comparatively long-lasting. Such a state of affairs seems to have existed during the 11th and 12th centuries although even long after the curtailment of this contact the influences seem to have continued. In illustration of the above statement are the famous bronzes of Ceylon which though at a superficial glance might appear to be products of the mainland, yet on close scrutiny would reveal their true Ceylonese character. Most of them were discovered in excavations near the Śiva temples at Polannaruwa and they include examples of several periods. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy has written on them in his usual inimitable and authoritative manner in his monograph on the *Colombo Museum Bronzes.*[1] Subsequently a majority of the bronzes have been illustrated and commented upon several times, owing to their special qualities. Here we shall briefly notice some of the most important and special characteristics of the bronzes belonging to the period ending about 1400 A.D. which are distinct from those met with in the bornzes produced by the contemporary schools in the mainland.

Of these bronzes three or four distinct groups can be distinguished. The Sūrya (Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Pl. VII, Fig. 14) and the Chaṇḍikeśvara (*ibid.*, Pl. IX, Fig. 18)
Fig. 268 may be said to be the earliest. Of these two, the Chaṇḍikeśvara seems to be earlier than the former. This is borne out by the heavy but smooth modelling, the restrained ornamentation, the finely arranged *keśa-makuṭa* and the absence of the anklets. The expression is beautiful and the pose is akin to that of many a Chaṇḍkeśvara of Tamil-nāḍ belonging to the 12th century A.D. The manner of holding the flower garland in his *añjali* hands is also comparable to the detail met with in similar bronzes belonging to Tamil-nāḍ. Then there is the *padmāsana* which is quite different in style from the *āsana* of the bronzes of the other groups and which is closely related to the *āsanas* of some of the bronzes from Tamil-nāḍ. On these grounds this may be assigned to the end of the 12th century.

The Sūrya is probably the most beautiful of these bronzes. That it is akin to the Sūrya (Fig. 211) from Hariśchandrapuram discussed above and dated to the 12th century A.D. is easily seen. But the atrophied conical *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, the thick series of necklaces, the unnaturally curving *yajñopavīta* and the prominent anklets on the legs are

[1] The authors of the *Catalogue* have discussed about them op pp. 43–47 of the *Catalogue* where they have given references to other publications on the bronzes.

proof positive for its later date than the other Sūrya. The modelling of the figure is superb and the proportions are beautiful. The pedestal is also worked tastefully and this is apparent in the workmanship of the *padmāsana*. This figure may be assigned to about 1200 A.D.

The second group consists of a number of bronzes such as the two Sundaramūrtis (*ibid.*, Pl. VIII, Figs. 15 and 16), the Jñānasambanda (*ibid.*, Pl. IX, Fig. 20) and the Appar (O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. XCI). All of them are marked by a slender but defective modelling. This is known from the unnatural manner of attaching the arms to the shoulders, the concave lines that enclose the leg, and possibly the arms too, and the wide chest over a narrow waist. Moreover they suffer from the defective proportions. In addition to these, the thick and stiff necklaces and the other stylised ornaments are characteristics which have begun to appear in bronzes, belonging to the 13th century, of Tamil-nāḍ. Besides, there is the prominent anklet on both the legs in all of them except in the Appar, with an additional anklet consisting of a series of rings in the larger of the two Sundaramūrtis. Above all the pedestals on which they stand are of the type showing lotus petal decoration on the bottom moulding of the *bhadrāsana*. This we have noticed as beginning to appear in Tamil-nāḍ only in a few bronzes assigned to the beginning of the 13th century. Its presence in all the bronzes mentioned above, show that this should have been thought of as a necessary item of a bronze by the makers of these bronzes; and for such a thing to be widely practised in another country would presuppose a considerable lapse of time. On these grounds these bronzes may be attributed to the end of the 13th century A.D. In spite of these late features, the expression of each of these figures has been rendered according to the classical traditions and it is this feature, to some extent coupled with the beautiful stances and expressive hand gestures that makes these bronzes lovely works of art of Ceylon.

The Naṭeśa[1] may be said to comprise the third group. It suffers badly from several defects. This fact has made Mr. Gangoly say that "it is perhaps the most decadent specimen of the image discovered upto date."[2] This is probably due to the fact that the maker of this bronze was quite new to the work of modelling figures in wax, perhaps a novice in the field. Nevertheless, that he was an artist of no mean order is exemplified by the extremely new way of showing the whirling locks of hair, by the beautiful decorative details, and above all by the realistic rendering of the facial features suggesting an expression of divine composure. Here too are seen the anklets. But the manner of holding the *ḍamaru* by all the fingers is based on ancient tradition. On the basis of these details this may be attributed to about 1300 A.D. The Naṭeśa[3] may be examined now. Fig. 269

[1] O. C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*, Pl. X, Figure on the proper left; and V. A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, Oxford, 1911, Fig. 188.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*, Pl. X, Figure on the proper right.

Fig. 270 Even a glance at it may show that it is distinctly different from the other Naṭeśa, in conception and execution. The square-cut face is obviously of the later Choḷa type. But the modelling and decorations leave much to be desired. The anklets are prominent and above all the *ḍamaru* is held by a single finger. In view of these features this may be dated to the first quarter of the 14th century A.D. (It may be said here itself that the other Naṭeśa [1] is a decadent specimen of the art and it may be dated to a period later than 1500 A.D.). The Śiva, in the so called *sandhyā-nṛitta* pose, [2] and the Pārvatī [3] show
Fig. 271 further development of the details. Of the two figures, Śiva is superior in every respect to Pārvatī and this is evident from the stance and the hand poses. But the extreme ornateness of the decorative details and the somewhat sharp facial features detract the quality of the bronze. The anklets are present here. The Pārvatī, however, is not at all a good specimen. But the presence of ornaments including the *vājī-bandha*. The presence of brackets below the spikes on either side is to be specially noted because an exactly similar detail is met with in some of the bronzes belonging to the later Pāṇḍyan school, (*e.g.*, Figs. 261 and 262), and the workmanship of the pedestal make it necessary to attribute the bronze to this period. On these grounds these two bronzes may be attributed to the second half of the 14th century A.D.

A word about their identification may be said. The figure of Śiva is not in the *sandhyā-nṛitta* pose but in the pose in which all the Vṛishabhavāhanamūrti bronzes should be. The manner in which the lower left arm is held as if leaning against the bull is enough to suggest this. In addition the left leg is crossed in the characteristic manner. So, these two bronzes may be said to form the Vṛishabhavāhana group. Then the question arises where is the vehicle of Śiva here? It is answered by pointing to the beautiful figure of bull [4] which has been usually dealt with separately. The classical qualities of the art, not met with in any of the other bronzes dealt with above, are
Fig. 272 prominently present in the bull. It therefore shines by contrast. With this bull behind, the Vṛishabhavāhana group must definitely look beautiful.

Of the remaining bronzes, the Umāsahita and Pārvatī [5] are apparently similar to the bronzes produced in Tamil-nāḍ during the late Vijayanagar period, and these may accordingly be assigned to the 17th century A.D. The presence of such late bronzes in Ceylon, shows that the religious intercourse between the Island and Tamil-nāḍ continued to be active even during that period as it used to be before.

The brief examination of the Ceylonese bronzes reveals the fact that there was a school of bronze in that country which was very active during the period between 12th

[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XI.
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XIII.
[3] S. Paranavitana, *Art and Architecture of Ceylon* (1954), Fig. 10.
[4] O. C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*, Pl. LXXXV.
[5] S. Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, Figs. 7 and 8 respectively.

and 14th centuries A.D. and in the productions of which quite a few original features are marked. This is exemplified by the slender modelling and by the *āsanas* bearing thick lotus petal carvings, even on the *bhadrāsana*. Such special characteristics make these bronzes belong to a separate class, although they exhibit qualities which are inspired by the traditions of the art that obtained in the mainland.

BRONZES OF THE ĀNDHRA SCHOOL

In the early centuries of the Christian era, this part of South India was the centre of great schools of sculpture and their contributions such as those from Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Jaggayyapeṭa are world famous. But from about the 5th century A.D., there does not seem to have existed any active school of art in this region although a few sculptures and bronzes such as those from Amarāvatī and Buddhapāḍ, dealt with at the beginning, have been rarely met with. The reasons are not known for this sudden disappearance of the artistic talents from this area. It is however known that there exist Hindu monuments scattered over the length and breadth of the Āndhradeśa awaiting a systematic survey and publication. A few interesting and important but isolated sculptures and temples of this area ascribed to the Early Eastern Chālukyan period have been brought to the notice of the world of scholars by Mr. C. Sivaramamurti through his book entitled *Early Eastern Chālukyan Sculptures* (published as a Bulletin of the Madras Museum). Even in this book no examples of bronzes have been dealt with. This fact shows clearly that there neither was a demand for bronzes nor were there *sthapatis* who could create works in bronzes. One of the reasons for the paucity of examples of this branch of sculpture seems to be this. In Tamil-nāḍ, throughout the ages from about 600 A.D., under the inspiring leadership of saints of spiritual greatness and under the exemplary patronage of the powerful princes and potentates, a number of magnificent temples were erecetd as well as elaborate arrangements were made for regular ritualistic offering of worship in them including periodical festivals requiring portable images in metal for taking out in procession. In Āndhradeśa, however, the avidity of the people in these matters does not seem to have been so marked but was very much subdued. Nevertheless from about the 11th-12th centuries A.D. there seems to have begun a renaissance in cultural matters the impetus for which was given by the enlightened rulers of the Kākatīya dynasty.[1] Examples of the art belonging to the period of this dynasty are found in Palampet and Warangal.[2] This new wave of enthusiasm for promoting the arts and crafts seems to have continued unabated ever since in Āndhradeśa as is evidenced by the works of art produced under the patronage of the enlightened but pompous kings

[1] See *The Early History of the Deccan* (published under the authority of the Government of Āndhra Pradesh and printed by the Oxford University Press, 1960), Chapter IX, for a recent and exhaustive treatment of the history of and sculpture under the Kākatīyas.

[2] *Ibid.*, Chapter X, pp. 741–42 and 759–61.

of the Vijayanagara empire which we shall examine in the following section. The bronzes from Āndhradeśa representing the period ending about 1400 A.D. are therefore only a few,[1] of which some of the well-known are noticed below. It may be said in advance that certain marked characteristics met with in the bronzes to be dealt with presently, which are akin to the stone sculptures of Warangal are also seen in their pristine form in the works of the subsequent periods too, belonging to this region.

Fig. 273 One of the earliest bronzes belonging to the period under discussion, is the standing Jaina Tīrthaṅkara Pārśvanātha,[2] ht. 17.5 *cm*, from Kogali in the Harpanahaḷḷi Taluk of the Bellary District. It stands in the erect posture and above its head are the simple but artistically worked five hoods of the serpent the *lāñchana* (cognizance) of the Tīrthaṅkara. As usual, the figure is otherwise devoid of any other ornamentation. The modelling is slender but beautiful and the treatment of the limbs is refined. The proportions too are good and features even in their somewhat worn out condition, are naturalistic. The slenderness of the modelling, it may be noted, has been a special characteristic of the sculptures of Āndhradeśa as is evidenced by the sculptures from Jaggayyapeṭa, Amarāvatī etc. In view of the excellent finish and beautiful features of the bronze, it may be attributed to about the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 274 The figure representing a woman, ht. 15.5 *cm*, "discovered accidentally during excavations of the foundations of a house in Warangal"[3] seems to be another beautiful specimen of the art. This has been identified as "Lakshmī in the form of a lamp-bearer." But it would be better to call it merely as a votive lamp-bearing figure on account of the fact that several such figures are known from Tamilnāḍ, and in every one of the cases, the figure may be said to be a representation of the donor who gave it away to a religious institution.[4] The idea behind this particular type of donation is that the person in whose behalf the figure is donated is considered to be doing the service of bearing the lamp eternally in front of the god.[5]

In modelling this will be seen to be quite akin to the above Pārśvanātha but the details of this figure owing to the difference in the subject are naturally different. This figure too stands in the *sama-bhaṅga* pose, and has a round and naturalistic head. The nose, eyes and lips are executed with understanding and the expression conveyed by the

[1] *Ibid*, p. 761, where Mr. Yazdani refers to this state of affairs.

[2] T. N. Ramachandran, *Jaina Monuments and Places of First Class Importance*, p. 66, where there is only a mere mention of this image.

[3] *The Early History of the Deccan*, p. 761, Pl. XLII (a). It has been described earlier in the *Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of Hyderabad*, 1933-4, p. 13, Pl. xi and in the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, June 1934, pp. 11-12, Pl. xiii.

[4] O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, p. 25.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

manner of their workmanship is serenity which is quite appropriate to the theme. So, as Mr. Yazdani says, "the workmanship of the face shows both technical skill and intellectual qualities of a high order." [1] The torso is beautifully modelled and the detail specially noteworthy is the breasts which are full and highly realistic. The waist is slender and the part below the waist too is treated with consummate skill showing clearly the emphasis on hips. There are a few beaded necklaces one of which is long and hangs down between the breasts somewhat in the fashion of the detail met with in the Sītā (Fig. 227) from Maṇakkāl discussed above. There are big *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears, and it is interesting to note that they are similar to those of all the three figures of the Veṇugopāla [2] group (Fig. 279) from Chimakūrti to be discussed below. The garment consists only of shorts with their broad ends shown hanging in front reaching to the ankles. The subdued *mekhalā* is to be noted. The other interesting point to be noted is the prominent single-ring anklets on the ankles. In the Chimakūrti group, the Veṇugopāla has a similar anklet whereas his consorts have each a pair of such rings. It has been shown above that in the examples of the art of Tamil-nāḍ, this particular detail makes its appearance only in the 12th century A.D.

The back view shows two interesting details One of them is the peculiar manner Fig. 275
of knotting of the hair which gives a clue to the identification of the figure as a representation of a human being and which is unmistakably the precursor of the same detail met with in all the three figures of the Veṇugopāla group from Chimakūrti. The second is the bulky buttocks which show the flaw in the modelling of this part of the figure, a tendency noticed also in bronzes of the periods from about the 12th century A.D. of Tamil-nāḍ.

The above mentioned details show that this bronze has not only some important features which characterise the bronzes from Tamil-nāḍ belonging to the 12th century and after, but also possesses a number of points including the modelling which make it a prototype of the figures of the Veṇugopāla group from Chimakūrti, but not a distant one at that. On these grounds this bronze may be assigned to the 12th century A.D., and the date of "ninth to tenth centuries A.D." given to it in *The Early History of the Deccan* (p. 761), seems therefore to be too early.

The Mahāvīra[3], ht. 29 *cm*, from Kogali in the Bellary District, stands on a pedestal in Fig. 276
front of which are shown three lions the middle one of which is the *lāñchana* of the Tīrthaṅkara. Behind is a *prabhā* with pointed apex bearing in front a *mukkoḍai* and a halo below. The pedestal has an inscription in Kanarese. Though the facial features

[1] *The Early History of the Deccan*, p. 761.
[2] *Catalogue*, Pl. X.
[3] T. N. Ramachandran, *op. cit.*, p. 65, Serial No. (iv).

are rendered in an excellent manner, the modelling is evolved and the details such as the pedestal and the *prabhā* are ornate. Owing to these, this bronze may be dated to the 13th–14th century A.D.

Thus the art of bronzes in Āndhradeśa during this period is attested by only a small number of examples. Even so, that it had its own traditions is amply borne out by the slender modelling and by the special ornamentation met with in the examples noticed above.

BRONZES OF THE VIJAYANAGAR PERIOD

It is well known that the establishment of the Vijayanagar empire about the middle of the 14th century ushered in an era of peace and prosperity for the whole of South India. This state of affairs may be said to have lasted till about 1700 A.D. The rulers of this empire were ardent Hindus, although they were ever ready to assist the cause of the followers of the other faiths too. They patronised all kinds of religious and cultural activities and as a consequence a number of temples were built and countless number of sculptures were produced during the time of their rule. In view of the fact that their sway extended over almost the whole of South India which has been for ages divided into three or four regions, each possessing a distinct group of traditions in art and culture, the works of art attributed to this period but belonging to different regions show features which are characteristic of the traditions of the region concerned. So, the evolution of the art during this period is best studied region-wise. Even during this period, the art of bronzes seems to have flourished only in Tamil-nāḍ as is known from the numerous examples, the specimens of the art known from each of the other regions namely, Andhra and Kerala being, however, only a few.

The Āndhra School

In view of the fact that an examination of the examples of bronzes from Āndhradeśa beloging to the Vijayanagar period, immediately after that of the bronzes from the same region attributed to earlier periods would facilitate the study of the development of the art here, some of the well knowu bronzes produced by this school of Āndhradeśa are dealt with below.

Fig. 277 The Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār in the Śiva temple at Kālahasti in the Chittoor District may be said to be one of the earliest and best examples of this school. Though the District of Chittoor has always remained as a border area between Tamil-nāḍ and Āndhradeśa, from the time of the establishment of the Vijayanagar empire, it gradually became more and more Āndhra in character. So, Kālahasti, Tiruppati and other adjacent areas may be said to form part and parcel of Āndhradeśa for purposes of our study. Hence the propriety of considering this bronze as of the Āndhra school of the early Vijayanagar

period. The details that are noteworthy in this bronze are the tall and slender build which unmistakably proves its affinity to the bronzes discussed above and to those to be discussed below, the peculiar dressing up of the hair, a late example of which will be seen in the ornate Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār (Fig. 320) from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu to be discussed below, and the pedestal composed of the two usual *āsanas* moulded together. The slight *bhaṅga* and the simple decorative details such as the apron-like garment, the *channavīra* and the anklets shown high up are also noteworthy. The arms are held up, and the poses of the hands suggest that the saint is going to pluck out his eye for replacing the damaged eye of Śiva his *ishṭa-devatā*. The expression suggests absolute composure which is quite in keeping with the traditional story relating to the act of the saint. In spite of the fact that the facial features are sharp, the elbows are angular and stylisation is evident from the circular mark of the knee-caps, the lines that compose the mass are pure and their flow is rhythmic, which are characteristics of classical traditions. So, this bronze may be assigned to the middle of the 15th century A.D.

The group of three standing figures representing the famous emperor of the Vijayanagar, namely Kṛishṇadevarāya and his two queens kept in the Śrīnivāsapperumāḷ temple on the hill of Tirumalai near Kālahasti may be examined next. In view of the fact that the person represented was a famous historical figure of India this group of bronzes (strictly they may be said to be of copper because of the high copper content of the alloy), has been illustrated and written upon frequently.[1] Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan gives a description of this group in his *Portrait Sculpture in South India* on pp. 46-47. He says: "..... he (*i.e.*, Kṛishṇadevarāya) stands in the centre, and a queen, Chinna-devi, stands on one side of him and another queen, Tirumala-devi stands on the other. The identity of each figure is placed beyond doubt by the label incised prominently on a shoulder of each statue. All three statues are made of copper and are excellent examples of repousse-work. Each is made in two hollow sections, a frontal and a rear one, put together so as to give the appearance of a solid statue and kept in position by rivets. They are exceedingly well-proportioned without exception and are executed with considerable skill-the workmanship being very delicate in places. The king's statue is about four feet in height, but statues of the queens have been made to a proportionately smaller scale, in deference in all probability, to the Indian artistic tradition of figuring the minor members of a group in a smaller size than that of the principal figure". Fig. 278

Among the other characteristics of the figures of this group the following are noteworthy *viz.*, the stiffness of the postures even of those of the queens which are in slight

[1] V. A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, (Oxford, 1911), Pl. XLVIII; O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, (Calcutta, 1915), Pl. LXXIV; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927), Fig. 245; and T. G. Aravamuthan, *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, (London, 1931), Fig. 21.

bhaṅga, the sharpness of such features as the nose, lips, the chin and the elbows and the angularities of the modelling. Besides, the draperies of the figures are not only elaborate but also ornate. The fan-wise projecting frill arrangements of the hem of the garment of the queens is a unique feature met with here. Though the breasts are full and are rendered with an eye on realism, unlike in the case of the bronzes representing goddesses, here they are covered with a piece of diaphanous cloth. The other intereisting detail to be noted is the headdress of the queen and the crown of the king. The king's crown is a conical cap with a couple of tassels hanging in front of it and it is exactly similar to that of the stone statue of the same king found in a niche in the north *gopuran* of the Naṭeśa temple at Chidambaram.[1] The headdress of the queens is of a circular *dhammilla* variety, and in the illustration, only the upper rim of it is visible. But surely it is worked beautifully as in some of the figures of the consorts of Sundaramūrti-nāyanār to be noticed below. Each of them stands on a *padmāsana* over *bhadrāsana* both of which are of the conventionalised type. In spite of the defects of these bronzes, their tall and slender modelling are in the true traditions of the Āndhra school and may therefore be said to be good examples of these persistent traditions as they obtained in the early decades of the 16th century A.D. The technique in which they are made and the ornaments of simple wires are specially noteworthy.

Fig. 279 The beautiful set of Veṇugopāla (ht. 22.5. *cm*) with Rukmiṇī (ht. 18.5 *cm*) and Satyabhāmā (ht. 18.5. *cm*) from Chimakūrti[2] in the Ongole Taluk of the Guntur District may be taken up next. Some more images including a few other Veṇugopāla sets, a Vishṇu, a Narasiṁha and a Kāliya-kṛishṇa have also been discovered in the same place, and a discussion on them is found on pp. 56–58 in the *Catalogue*. Of all these, the Veṇugopāla set under study is easily the best as the figures that comprise the set are simple and well proportioned and as they are neatly executed.[3] The interesting points to be noted in them are the following.

Fig. 280 The most conspicuous of them is their slender modelling which connects them at once with the bronzes of this school, belonging to earlier periods. Their headdresses are simple and are apparently of the type met with in the lamp-bearer (Fig. 274) from Warangal. The necklaces are of very simple workmanship and the draperies are also simple but the treatment of the knots in front, though nice, is somewhat folkish in character. Of the three figures, Veṇugopāla is the best in every respect. Its modelling is perfect, stance charming, hand-poses life-like and expression full of divine splendour. A small dagger is seen tucked in at the right side. There are the characteristic shoulder

[1] T. G. Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, p. 47, Fig. 22.
[2] *Catalogue*, p. 91, No. 10; Pl. X, Figs. 1 and 2.
[3] *Ibid.*

ornaments including the looped one. The modelling of the other two figures is not good and this is proved by the disproportionate rendering of the torso, defective modelling of the arms and the unrealistic delineation of the fingers. Nevertheless, the features of the face and the breasts are exceedingly well executed and this, coupled with the beautiful ring-like *patra-kuṇḍalas* and the beautiful *keśa-bandha*, makes these figures excellent examples of this school. From these details and from the fully conventionalised *āsana* on which each stands, these bronzes may be said to date from about 1600 A.D.

The other Veṇugopāla set[1] from the same place obviously is in the same style but of a considerably later period. They may be dated to about 1700 A.D. The next in point of time comes the third Veṇugopāla set.[2] The style in which the figures of this set are done is apparently highly manneristic. This is known from the delineation of the garment of each of them. Moreover, the deterioration of the modelling is evident in the depiction of the waist and limbs of the female figures. These may be dated to the 18th century A.D.

This brings to a close the examination of the bronzes of this school. The earlier bronzes of this school show the continuance of the earlier traditions while the late examples are poor in every respect suggesting the setting in of decline of the art. The bronzes from this part of South India belonging to subsequent periods are very inferior as will be shown below in the proper context.

The Tamilian School

It is again in Tamil-nāḍ that the schools of bronzes were very active during this period also. This is known not only from the large number of examples of the art already known to the scholars but also from the existence of countless specimens of them either in worship or kept in stores in the temples of South India. Just as the specimens of the Āndhra school of the period are seen to have been made according to the age-old traditions of the region, the bronzes of Tamil-nāḍ too as will be seen below, are made in the earlier traditions with certain modifications in modelling and decoration brought about by the efflux of time. Even amongst them, those that belong to the ancient Chola country possess certain distinctive features that have been characteristic of the bronzes of the locality belonging to earlier periods also. Similarly the bronzes from places in the ancient Pāṇḍyan country display features characteristic of the traditions of the art that have been in vogue in that area.

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 91, No. 11.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 90, No. 8.

Choḷa-maṇḍalam Bronzes

Fig. 281 Of the specimens of the art belonging to Choḷa-maṇḍalam the Kaṅkālamūrti[1] from Tirukkalar, Tanjore District, is one of the earliest. As has been said by the authors of the *Catalogue*, it has affinity with bronzes of the later Choḷa period. But the *jaṭā-makuṭa* and the ornaments including the serpent encircling the lower right fore-arm and the waist-bands are almost stylised. The *kiṅkiṇī*-attached ornament present on both the legs is another interesting detail characteristic of the period. Above all, the sharp features of the face and the stiff modelling of the limbs which are very well seen at
Fig. 282 the back prove that the bronze is a product of a school somewhat removed in time from the last phase of the school of later Choḷa period. The little antelope is worked beautifully and the manner in which it is made to jump is interesting. On these grounds this bronze may be dated to the beginning of the 15th century. So, the 13th century A.D. date given to it in *The Art of India and Pakistan* is rather too early.

Fig. 283 The beautiful little Yoga-narasiṁha,[2] ht. 16.5 *cm*, locality not known, but certainly from some place in the Choḷa territory, is another excellent specimen of the early phase of this period. The posture is splendid, the manes are not stylised, the flowery *channa-vīra* is delicately worked and the expression is suggestive of joy (probably born out of the idea of having protected his ardent devotee Prahlāda and brought peace to the entire universe by destroying Hiraṇya-kaśipu). This may be dated to about the first quarter of the 15th century A.D. It may be mentioned here the fact that most of the Vijayanagar rulers were Vaishṇavites although they were never bigoted; and interestingly the period is represented by a number of Vaishṇavite bronzes especially those representing the *avatārs* of Vishṇu.

Fig. 284 The pretty little piece representing probably Niśmubhasūdanī, ht. 16.25 *cm*, from Tambikkoṭṭai-Vaḍakāḍu in the Pattukkottai Taluk of the Tanjore District is an interesting specimen of the art of this period. It is eight-armed and the emblems held in them such as the trident, *ḍamaru*-like object, the shield and the trident-topped *ghaṇṭā* (bell) are noteworthy. Though the finish of its torso and the workmanship of the emblems and ornaments resemble those of the earlier bronzes, protruding face with sharp features, the presence of looped string beside another string on the shoulders, the anklets on both the legs, the poor modelling of the legs and above all the stylised *keśa-maṇḍala* and *prabhāvali* mark the bronze out as belonging to about the second quarter of the 15th century A.D. The slender build of the demon shown lying on his back on the front side of the pedestal also goes to support this dating. In spite of this, in general treatment it displays qualities of a refined work of art.

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[1] *Catalogue*, p. 115; *The Art of India and Pakistan*, pp. 74–75, Pl. 53, Fig. 359.

[2] *Catalogue*, p. 78, No. 7.

The Gaṇeśa from Kīḻakkurichi in the former Pudukkottai State, now in the Govern- Fig. 285
ment Museum, Pudukkottai, is also to be assigned to about the same period on account of the ornate *āsanas*, although the other details of the bronze such as the beautiful modelling, and delicately worked ornaments, the presence of an anklet on the left leg only and above all the realistic delineation of the limbs and the elephant head with the beautifully stretching out trunk would suggest an earlier date for it.

The seated goddess, probably Umā, originally belonging to a Somāskanda group, Fig. 286
from Tiruveṇkāḍu is an excellent specimen of the art. Its posture, the tender fingers the realistic modelling of the torso showing traces of folds on the stomach and the beautiful *padmāsana* are all treated tastefully. But the face with sharp features, the sparsness of ornamentation, the slightly less successfully modelled left arm, mask-like manner in which the garment is worked and the sharp-edged *bhadrāsana* not moulded together with the *padmāsana* are obviously according to the traditions of the art of the 15th century. This bronze may be assigned to about the middle of the 15th century.

The Kāliya-kṛishṇa, ht. 75 *cm*, from Nilappaḍi, Tanjore District is another beautiful Fig. 287
specimen of the art. Not only the main figure but the subsidiary figures of the serpent and the Nāga-rāja in *añjali* pose shown under the five spread-out hoods of the serpent are also executed with skill, with the result the whole composition seems to throb with life. This may be assigned to the middle of the 15th century A.D., on the basis of the style of the ornaments and facial features.

The Naṭeśa, ht. 89 *cm*, from Zamin Peraiyūr in Perambalur Taluk of the Tri- Fig. 288
chirappalli District, formerly in the Madras Museum, subsequently presented by the Government of Madras to the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Banaras, is a charming bronze but for the perforated *prabhā* showing elaborately worked fifty-three five-tongued flames on it. The stiff necklets, besides the significant long beaded rosary, the two rows of feathers on the crown, the holding of the *ḍamaru* by a single finger and the presence on both the legs the thin *kiṅkiṇī*–attached ornament are noteworthy as it is they that give a clue for the attribution of the figure to about the middle of the 15th century A.D.

The Pārvatī, about 87 *cm* high, from Tiruvāḍuturai in the Tanjore District stands Fig. 289
on a less clearly worked *padmāsana*, in the beautiful *tri-bhaṅga* pose. Its modelling is beautiful but its build is slender. The manner of depicting the breasts is in the classical tradition, the fingers are rendered gracefully, the garment with finely worked folds is charming, the flow of the *yajñopavīta* is delineated in a superb manner and the expression is one of serenity. But a significant change is noticed in the depiction of the necklaces namely they are of simple wires not of the thick and broad type showing jasmine flower-like details met with in the bronzes of earlier periods. Except for this, its affinity to the seated Umā (Fig. 286) from Tiruveṇkāḍu discussed above is striking.

This type of ornaments has however been noticed in such examples of Kṛishṇadeva-rāya and his queens (Fig. 278) and in the figures of the Veṇugopāla set (Fig. 279) from Chimakūrti. This feature coupled with the tall and slender build of the figure may be taken to suggest that it has been influenced by the traditions of the Āndhra school of art, although in other respects including the beautiful finish and fine proportions, it is a typical example of the local school. These new elements characterise the bronzes of the subsequent period, a fact which may be taken to suggest the gradual flow of artistic traditions of the Āndra school into Tamil-nāḍ in the wake of the expansion of the Vijayanagar empire. If this is so, then this bronze may be said to be one of the earliest examples in which are blended in a superb and pleasing manner elements of the traditions of both the schools. This may be attributed to the third quarter of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 290 The Chaṇḍikeśvara, ht. about 75 *cm*, belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam in the
Fig. 291 Tanjore District and the beautiful Kāḷiya-kṛishṇa, ht. about 63 *cm*, from Sundarapperumāḷ-kovil in the Tanjore District may be seen to be akin in style to the above discussed Pārvatī and may therefore be not much removed in time from that. The workmanship of the *padmāsanas* of these figures is similar to that of the same *āsana* of the Umā (Fig. 286) from Tiruveṇkāḍu. The exuberance of the style and the beauty of the
Fig. 292 modelling of the Kāḷiya-kṛishṇa are seen best in its rear view. These may also be attributed to the third quarter of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 293 The famous Pārvatī,[1] ht. 93 *cm*, from Jāmbavānoḍai, Tanjore District, formerly in the Madras Museum, subsequently presented to the National Museum, New Delhi, is another interesting example of the art. Its affinity to the Pārvatī (Fig. 289) from Tiruvāḍuturai discussed above is great, but the other figure has a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* whereas the present figure has a *keśa-makuṭa*. The wiry necklace, sharp features of the face, the angularities of the elbow, the slender build and the stylised garment are noteworthy. This may be attributed to the last quarter of the 15th century A.D.[2]

Fig. 294 Now we shall examine the important Naṭeśa,[3] ht. 67 *cm*, from Belūr in the Salem District. Its importance lies in the fact that on its *bhadrāsana* is an inscription dated Kali 4611 which is equal to 1510 A.D. Though this pedestal is separate, it has been considered to go together with the figure proper and therefore, the date is applicable to the figure also. That the date of the figure is known, gives one great relief because it removes the great responsibility placed on him in dating the bronze solely on the basis of the style. The details to be taken note of in this bronze, are the ornate *prabhā* of oval shape possessing forty flames, each of which, except the topmost one showing four

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 118, No. 11; *The Art of India and Pakistan*, p. 75, Pl. 57, Fig. 322.
[2] In *The Art of India and Pakistan* its date is given simply as 15th century A.D.
[3] *Catalogue*, p. 112, Pl. XVI, Fig. 2.

tongues and all of them connected by a ring-like piece, the clear fan-wise arrangement of the feathers on the crown and the anklets on both ankles. The treatment of the face and the modelling of the legs are bad. The ugly contraction at the knee-joint is an eye-sore. The stretching-out of the left leg too is inartistically dealt with. It is therefore clear that by the beginning of the 16th century the art has begun to decline.

The ten-armed standing figure of Bhairava,[1] ht. 14 *cm*, from Tanjore District, though a small bronze, shows beautiful features. The front hands are in *abhaya* and *varada* respectively. The four other right hands hold a *ḍamaru*, an *aṅkuśa*, a *khaḍga* and a *śūla*. The corresponding left hands hold a *nāga*, a *pāśa*, a *ghaṇṭā* and a *kapāla*. The long garland worn in the *yajñopavīta* fashion is interesting as also the wavy shooting up of the *jaṭās* forming a beautiful heart-shaped halo behind the head. The simple necklet, the anklets and the sharp-edged *āsana* are very important as they are marks of its age. This figure may be dated to about the first quarter of the 16th century A.D. Fig. 295

The standing goddess,[2] ht. 62 *cm*, from Śrīraṅgam, Tiruchirappalli District, with an attendant on whose head she has placed her left hand, is a masterpiece of the art of the 16th century A.D. Its rounded features and beautiful pose are dealt with in an exceptionally brilliant manner. The modelling of the breasts, as is characteristic of good examples, is superb. But the slight stunting of the torso and the excessive emphasis laid on the right hip have deprived this bronze to some extent of its real charm. The simple wiry necklet of the figure is noteworthy. This bronze may be assigned to the middle of the 16th century A.D. It may be noted that this bronze, according to the traditions of the territory, is heavy. So also are the bronzes to be dealt with hereafter. This shows from about the middle of the 16th century the traditions of the art of the Āndhra school which seem to have exerted their influence on the traditions of the Choḷa-maṇḍalam for about a century have lost their hold on the *sthapatis* of this territory and they, since then, seem to have begun to practice the art according to the indigenous traditions. Fig. 296

The beautiful Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār,[3] ht. 75 *cm*, from Śrīnivāsanallūr, Tiruchirappalli District, a "particularly well executed bronze" may also be assigned to the same period. Fig. 297

The Sudarśana, locality not known, now in the Art Gallery, Tanjore, is a powerful representation of the Āyudha Purusha with sixteen arms and in the posture of quick movement. The lotus petal designs along the inner fringe of the discus, the *kaṇṭhīs*, the anklets and calf-ornament and the style of the *āsanas* show that this bronze belongs to about the third quarter of the 16th century A.D. Fig. 298

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 115–16.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 137, Unidentified No. 1.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 98, No. 11.

The manner in which the hair is dressed in the bronzes representing women during the second half of the 16th century A.D. is beautifully illustrated by the hair-dressing of
Fig. 299 the two consorts of Sundaramūrti-nāyanār, namely, Saṅgili-nāchiyār and Paravai-nāchiyār from Tiruvāymūr in the Tanjore District. The former shows a *keśa-bandha* type and the latter shows the circular type of *dhammilla* dressing. Besides, the naturalistic manner of marking the hair falling in strands with curls at the tip, is a special feature of these bronzes.

Fig. 300 The Subrahmaṇya as Śikhivāhana,[1] ht. 16 *cm*, from Muḷḷaṅguḍi in the Tanjore District is a fine specimen attributable to the last quarter of the 16th century. The study of the peacock is remarkable and the manner in which the deity is seated on it is
Fig. 301 exemplary. The back view shows the *śiraś-cakra* of ornate type and the strands of hair falling on the back of the neck with the pendant, absent in the other bronzes discussed above, hanging in the middle.

Fig. 302 The bronze representing Pradoshamūrti from Tiruvāḍuturai may also be assigned to this period. The necklets of wire, heaviness of modelling, the stylised headgear, *prabhā* and garments and the leg-ornament tied high up near the knee of Śiva help us in dating the bronze. Moreover, the affinity of the Pārvatī of this group with the goddess from Śrīraṅgam (Fig. 296) noticed above, is striking; but apparently the features of this figure are more evolved than those of the other. The sharp-edged *āsana* too is a characteristic of the bronzes of this period. In spite of the conventionalisation of details, owing to good proportions and beautiful poses, these two figures form a splendid group composition, the stylistic arch of the *prabhā* with prominent *makara*-head decoration at its ends adding charm to it.

Fig. 303 Now we shall examine the group of three bronzes representing Vishṇu as Vaikuṇṭhanātha, ht. 22 *cm*, with Śrīdevī, ht. 16 *cm*, and Bhūdevī, ht. 16 *cm*,[2] from Polagam in the Tanjore District. Each one of them is seated on a seat made of coiled serpent. The Vishṇu is seated with right leg placed on the left lap. His lower right arm hangs down and is resting on the right knee while the corresponding left arm is kept on the seat as if in support of the body leaning backwards. This posture makes the figure look majestic. The bronzes of the goddesses are similar to each in every one of the respects including, rather strangely, the *kuca-bandha* which is usually found only in Śrīdevī. The modelling though heavy is smooth except for a certain amount of imperfection noticed in the arms of Vishṇu. The ornaments are uniformly stiff and heavy. The draperies have apparently become stiff. The mask-like manner of showing them is noteworthy. In spite of these the faces of these figures are full of splendour and the expression suggests divine composure. This group may be assigned to about 1600 A.D.

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 127.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 134, No. 1.

The Devasenāpati from Tiruveḷvikkuḍi and the Kālārimūrti from Tirukkaḍavūr, both the places in Tanjore District, may be seen to be identical in style. They are iconographically rare specimens. They may be assigned to the beginning of the 17th century A.D. Fig. 304 Fig. 305

The Jñānasambanda [1], ht. 51 *cm*, from Vaḍakkuppoyyūr in the Tanjore District is a beautiful specimen of the art. Here a young child decked in the typical children's jewellery is represented. The arrangement of the hair with the usual knot projecting in front is also interesting. The child's innocence is apparent in the expression. The workmanship of the stiff necklaces and *channavīra*, the anklets and the *āsana* is characteristic of the period. This may be assigned to the first quarter of the 17th century A.D. Fig. 306

The Pradoshamūrti,[2] ht. 43 *cm*, from Panaṅgāttāṅguḍi, Tanjore District, may on grounds of style be said to belong to the first quarter of the 17th century A.D. This is known from the sharp facial features, unsatisfactory modelling, prominent nipples and stiff jewellery. It is not of Choḷa type as mentioned in the *Catalogue*. Fig. 307

A number of bronzes were discovered at Madukkūr in Tanjore District. Of these the representations of the Śaiva saints namely Appar, Sundarar, Jñānasambandar and Māṇikkavāchakar are interesting. All of them are in one and the same style, decorative details being changed according to the theme. The Appar in *añjali*, spud on left arm, wearing rosary of beads on head, arms and wrists and a loin-cloth, stands in *ābhaṅga* pose on a *padmāsana*. There is smoothness and evenness in modelling and splendour in expression. The Jñānasambandar, ht. 74 *cm*, is somewhat ornate, and its modelling is not so good. Here somewhat a grown up child is represented. Instead of closely shown curls of hair, a *keśa-makuṭa* is shown here. The features of the face and the gestures of hands are highly expressive. The Māṇikkavāchakar, ht. 59 *cm*, is a more beautiful figure than the Appar. Its modelling is fine, *bhaṅga* is charming and the expression is full of seriousness which is in keeping with the expounding of the truth contained in his wonderful work called the *Tiruvāṟakam*, as suggested by the right hand in *vyākhyāna-mudrā* and the left hand holding the manuscript of the scripture. The *yajñopavīta* is rendered in a beautifully swaying manner. The beauty of its back view is worth seeing. Fig. 308 Fig. 309 Fig. 310 Fig. 311

The group of Sundaramūrti, ht. 66 *cm*, and Paravai, ht. 57 *cm*, is more interesting than the others. Of the two, Sundaramūrti is not so good as Paravai. The interesting points of the former are its headdress and postures of the arms. The defective details are the sharp features of the face and the Sharpness in the rendering of the knees. Paravai is an excellent specimen of the art of the period. Just as in the other Paravai from Fig. 312

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 134, No. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 103, No. 1.

Tiruvāymūr (Fig. 299), here also the headdress is of the circular *dhammilla* type. Though heavy, its contours are not bad as compared with Sundaramūrti. The beauty of
Fig. 313 the hair-dress and modelling of Paravai is known better from its back view. All these bronzes may be assigned to the end of the first quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 314 The crawling Bālakṛishṇa [1] made of brass, 15 *cm* long, from Uḷundaṅguḍi in the
Fig. 315 Tiruchirappalli District and the charming Yaśodā-kṛishṇa,[2] ht. 12.5 *cm*, from Thogūr in
Fig. 316 the Tanjore District and the interesting Aiyanār [3] riding an elephant, ht. 57 *cm*, from the same place are other interesting specimens of the art and they may be dated to the beginning of the second quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 317 Two bronzes representing the famous Śaivite woman saint, namely Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, one belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam in the Tanjore District and
Fig. 317-A the other from Tirutturaippūṇḍi (Fig. 317-A) in the same District may be said to belong to the second quarter of the 17th century A.D. Interestingly the former shows an ordinary woman while the other is a representation of the saint as an emaciated woman. It is in this latter form that the saint is usually depicted in sculpture and bronzes.

Fig. 318 The group of Rāma,[4] (ht. 22.5 *cm*), Sītā (ht. 19 *cm*) and Lakshmaṇa (ht. 20 *cm*) from Peruntoṭṭam in the Tanjore District, is interesting as it represents the figures in the fully conventionalised form. Both Rāma and Lakshmaṇa wear *kirīṭa-makuṭa* and Sītā wears not only *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* but also *kuca-bandha* which, being characteristic of Śrīdevī clearly shows the complete identification of Sītā with Śrīdevī. The ornateness of the bronzes is glaring although because of the good proportions and beautiful *bhaṅgas*, they have a charming look. These may be assigned to the middle of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 319 The Hanumān [5], locality not known but now in the Victoria and Albert Museum,
Fig. 320 South Kensington, London and the Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār [6], ht. 78 *cm*, from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu in the Chittoor District may be said to belong to the same period as the above. The modelling and other details of both are of an inferior type. They are very unsatisfactory especially in the Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār. The interesting point to be noted in this bronze is its headdress which is similar to that of the Kaṇṇappar (Fig. 277) from Kālahasti discussed above. This indicates that the traditions regarding the manner of decorating a Kaṇṇappar figure have been followed throughout the ages without much change.

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[1] *Catalogue*, p. 84, No. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 83, No. 6.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 128, No. 7.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 81, No. 3.
[5] O. C. Gangoly, *South Indian Bronzes*, Pl. LXIX.
[6] *Catalogue*, p. 133, No. 2.

The Śiva in the *sukhāsana* pose in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai may be assigned to the third quarter of the 17th century A.D. on the basis of the stylised features such as the headdress and ornaments. The necklaces of wire are significant aids in this connection. Fig. 321

The Nṛitya Gaṇeśa [1], ht. about 43 *cm*, locality not known, but probably from Tanjore District, is a typical example of the art as was in vogue in the third quarter of the 17th century. The ornaments made of thin strings only and the uncouth modelling of the legs are proof positive for this. Fig. 322

The eight-armed Ugra-narasiṁha in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai and the eight-armed Bhairava from Kālahasti in the Chittoor District are akin in modelling and decorative details. They may be dated to the last quarter of the 17th century A.D. Fig. 323 Fig. 324

The last bronze to be dealt with here is the Avalokiteśvara [2], ht. 105 *cm*, from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam in the Tanjore District. Its ornate features and stylised details and the elaborately worked *prabhā*, all go to show that the bronze belongs to the end of the 17th century A.D. Fig. 325

The foregoing study of a select number of bronzes produced in Choḷa-maṇḍalam during the Vijayanagar period has revealed several interesting points relating to the development of the art. From 1400 A.D., for about a century, there seems to have occurred a commingling of the traditions of the art of the Andhra school and those of the school of the Choḷa-maṇḍalam. Beautiful examples of this mixed style are the Pārvatī (Fig. 293) from Jāmbavānoḍai and the Kāliya-kṛishṇa (Fig. 291) from Sundarapperumāḷ-kovil. Then the *sthapatis* of Choḷa-maṇḍalam seem to have again reverted to the indigenous traditions. One of the best examples that illustrates this change is the Subrahmaṇya (Fig. 300) from Muḷḷaṅguḍi. But about the last phase of this period the art began to decline rapidly and consequently the examples belonging to this phase suffer very much from imperfect modelling and stiff features.

A significant change has been noticed in regard to jewellery in the examples examined above. From after about the middle of the 15th century A.D., the necklaces etc., instead being thick, are shown as made of simple wire. This characteristic persists till the end of the period and is seen to have been continued even in bronzes of the modern period. Similarly in the case of the *āsanas*, especially in *bhadrāsanas*, a notable change of workmanship has been effected. From after 1500 A.D., or so, the edges of

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 125, No. 6.

[2] T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, p. 50, Pl. XVIII, Fig. 1.

the mouldings of the *bhadrāsana* have become sharp. Besides, the petal designs on the lower-most moulding of this *āsana* have become much stylised.

A variety of themes have been chosen for representation. Of these Subrahmaṇya on peacock (Fig. 300), the Aiyanār on elephant (Fig. 316) and the saints of Vaishṇavism and Śaivism are noteworthy. The depiction of the hair-dressing in the figures of women such as Paravai (Figs. 312, 313) the consort of Sundaramūrti-nāyanār is interesting. That the *sthapatis* of the last phase of this period too were masters in the technique of making bronzes is amply borne out by the remarkable eight-armed Bhairava (Fig. 324) from Kālahasti. Another interesting fact known from the above study is that even upto the end of the 17th century A.D. there was a flourishing Buddhist community at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, which required for its religious purposes, such huge and intricately worked bronzes as the Avalokiteśvara.

A characteristic of the bronzes of this period belonging to Choḷa-maṇḍalam prominently seen, is the evenness of their modelling and unhampered flow of lines.

Pāṇḍi-Maṇḍalam Bronzes

Now we shall examine some select specimens of the art produced in the ancient Pāṇḍyan territory, during the Vijayanagar period.

Fig. 326 One of the earliest bronzes of this region belonging to this period is the Pradoshamūrti in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai. Even at a glance the peculiarities of modelling and decorations of the group can be recognised. The draperies are especially noteworthy. Yet, they bear marks of classical traditions in their high proportions and smooth modelling. Of the two figures, it is the Pārvatī that is typical of the school. The thick anklets of Śiva and the three-ringed anklets of Pārvatī are noteworthy. These and the elaborate shoulder ornaments suggest the middle of the 15th century as the date for the group.

Fig. 327 Another earliest bronze of this territory to belong to this period is the beautiful Kāḷiya-kṛishṇa in the Kūḍal Aḻagar (Vishṇu) temple at Madurai. Except for the heaviness in modelling and the slight imperfection in the rendering of the poses of the arms, this is a good example of the school. The headdress, the thick jewels and the serpent are all worked in a delicate manner. The treatment of the *āsana* which is a *bhadra-padmāsana*, is particularly good. The figures in miniature size representing Kāḷiya under the hoods of the serpent and his consort, Nāginī, on the pedestal in front are also executed skilfully. This image may be attributed to the last quarter of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 328 The group representing Kṛishṇa[1] (ht. 88 *cm*,) with Rukmiṇī (ht. 68 *cm*) and Satyabhāmā (ht. 67 *cm*), from Sermādevi in the Tirunelveli District show the

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 92, No. 1.

characteristic sharp facial features, the looped shoulder ornament, anklets (single-ringed in Kṛishṇa which shows another on left leg above the ankle and triple-ringed in Satyabhāmā and with a cluster of thin rings in the Rukmiṇī), *keyūras* and elbow ornaments. The presence of thick and broad necklet in Kṛishṇa shows that the group is earlier in date than 1500 A.D. The headdress of all the three is noteworthy, especially that of the goddesses, which is a variety of *dhammilla*, tied to the left in a pleasing manner. The modelling is as usual heavy and the imperfection in depicting the postures of the limbs, a special characteristic of the traditions of this school, is apparent in the manner in which the right arm of Kṛishṇa is depicted. The ornaments and draperies are worked in low relief. The pedestals are of the standardised type. This group may be assigned to the last quarter of the 15th century A.D.

The Sundaramūtri from the Nellaiyappar (Śiva) temple of Tirunelveli seems also to belong to this period, although it might appear to possess certain features like better modelling and less exuberant ornamentation than the Kṛishṇa of the above group. Fig. 329

The Kṛishṇa from the Kṛishṇa temple in Ambāsamudram in the Tirunelveli District, may be found to be identical in style with the Kṛishṇa from Sermādevi (Fig. 327) discussed above. But the imperfection met with in the postures, in the rendering of the fingers and in the modelling-especially noticed in the knee-joint-is more here than in the other. This may therefore be dated to the first quarter of the 16th century A.D. Fig. 330

The group of Adhikāra-nandi, ht. 75 *cm*, with consort, ht. 65 *cm*, from Vetti-ālaṅguḷam in the Ramanathapuram District, is an interesting specimen of the period both for its artistic qualities and its iconography. The ornaments including those on the shoulder are of thin wire, the draperies are worked in low relief and the headdresses and *āsanas* are stylised. Though they no doubt belong to the Pāṇḍyan country, in their modelling, decoration and stances, they seem to display characteristics of the traditions of the art of the Choḷa-maṇḍalam. They may be assigned to about the middle of the 16th century A.D. Fig. 331

The semi-emaciated figure of Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār from the Kuttālanāthasvāmin temple at Kuttālam in the Tirunelveli District is a beautiful bronze of the period. The expression is especialy realistic. This may be assigned to the third quarter of the 16th century A.D. Fig. 332

The bronze representing Sundramūrti in the Kuttālanāthasvāmin temple, Kuttālam in the Tirunelveli District is one of the latest examples of this school. Its stiff poses, imperfect modelling and stiff ornaments such as the armlets and anklets, indicate clearly that it is a perfect specimen of lifeless conventionalism, to which the art was rapidly heading during the last phase of the period under discussion. The stiff wood-like unornamented pedestal is also noteworthy. This may be assigned to about 1600 A.D. Fig. 333

Fig. 334 The last examples of the school to be noticed here are the Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī, each 59 *cm* high, from Ammāppeṭṭai in the Madurai District, bronzes representing goddesses (*i.e.*, women of the period) which are also of the completely conventionalised type. Every one of the details of each of these, such as the ear-decorations, the other ornaments, drapery and the peculiar anklets proclaim this. Added to these is the *āsana* in the typical inartistic style of the period. These may be assigned to about the middle of the 17th century A.D.

The characteristics of the examples of bronzes of this period belonging to this school are heaviness in modelling, imperfect manner of displaying the postures of the arms, the exuberant and stiff ornamentation and extreme sharpness of features. During the last phase of the school, the art had declined so much that the examples produced then were mere conventional figures without any suggestion of qualities like beauty or rhythm or proportions. This state of affairs paved the way for the utter deterioration in the standards of the art during the subsequent period called for the sake of convenience, the modern period. A few examples of bronzes belonging to this period discussed below will amply bear out this statement.

BRONZES OF THE MODERN PERIOD

Fig. 335 Of the numerous examples of bronzes belonging to this period the Garuḍa[1], ht. 20 *cm*, from Kaṇkoḍattavanitam in the Tanjore District, is one of the earliest. The manner of representing the serpent and the stiff arms prove that the bronze is a poor specimen of art. This may be assigned to the first half of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 336 The eight-armed Vīrabhadra[2], ht. 95 *cm*, from Tiruvālaṅgāḍu in the Chittoor District is another example of the period and it may be dated to the second half of the 17th

Fig. 337 century A.D. The Kaṅkālamūrti in the Kuttālanāthasvāmin temple at Kuttālam in the Tirunelveli District is more elaborate than the previous Vīrabhadra, and it may be assigned to about 1700 A.D.

Fig. 338 The Kāliya-kṛishṇa, ht. 75 *cm*, from Palani in the Madurai District has details which are clear-cut. But that there is a wide gulf separating this and the other Kāliya-kṛishṇa (Fig. 327) in the Kūḍal Aḻagar temple at Madurai is easily seen. In this example the workmanship of the Kāliya is significant. This may be assigned to the middle of the 18th century A.D., if not later.

Fig. 339 The Naṭeśa, locality not known, now in the art collection of the Philadelphia Museum, Pennsylvania, U. S. A., is a good example of the art of the period. The inartistic manner of depicting the left arm in *gaja-hasta* posture is itself enough to show

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 94, No. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 116, No. 1.

its date. It may be dated to about 1800 A.D. To a still later period may belong the wood-like Śiva belonging to the Government Museum, Pudukkottai. It may be dated to the first quarter of the 19th century A.D. The figure representing Yaśodā-kṛishṇa[1], ht. 14 *cm*, from Uppiliyapuram in the Tiruchirappalli District, is a fully conventionalised specimen. That there is no comparison between this and the beautiful Yaśodā-kṛishṇa (Fig. 315) from Thogūr is apparent. This may be taken as typical of the art as it obtained about the middle of the 19th century A.D. The Varadarāja[2], ht. 53 *cm*, is another typical example of the art of the period. The authors of the *Catalogue* have rightly said that "it has been cast in the style suggestive of the most ornate style of temple architecture of the modern period" (p. 69). This may also be assigned to about the middle of the 19th century. It is however an interesting specimen from the point of view of the technique in which it is made. As the above mentioned authors say, the casting of this bronze is done with an unstable vacuolated core. It may be mentioned here that several bronzes in the folk style, to be discussed below, are cast in this style. Fig. 340 Fig. 341 Fig. 342

The Varadarāja[3], with consorts in an elaborate setting consisting of a pedestal on which they stand borne by Garuḍa and an ornate *prabhā*, total height of the group being 40 *cm*, locality not known, is an example of the art as it existed during the second half of the 19th century A D. The three principal figures are of copper and the rest are of brass. As has been said by the authors of the *Catalogue* "the three principal images are rather crude, and the only special interest attaching to the set lies in their elaborate and somewhat better executed setting" (p. 68). It may be said that it is in this style bronzes, both big and small, were made in the subsequent period. This is exemplified by a number of examples of bronzes made, in 1908–09 by a *sthapati* of Svāmimalai near Kumbhakoṇam in the Tanjore District, to order from Mr. O. C. Gangoly who has reproduced them in his *South Indian Bronzes*, on Pls. XLVIII, LIX and LXXII. Fig. 343

BRONZES FROM TRICHŪR (KERAḶA)

The Government Museum at Trichūr near Cochin in the Kerala State contains a small number of bronzes discovered in the neighbouring places. Three of them may be seen to possess characteristics of the art of the period under discussion. One of them is a *dvāra-pālaka*, which forms a pair with another one, both of which are badly mutilated. The chief interest of these two figures is that they are made in the hollow-cast process, which can be noted from the hollow of the broken left arm of the figure. Secondly the workmanship of the details is in the typical style of the locality, in which the well-known Fig. 344

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 82, No. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 69, No. 7, Pl. II, Fig. 4.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 68, No. 2.

17th-18th century paintings in Cochin and some other places in Keraḷa are executed. The elaborate ornamentation and the heavy modelling of the figure testify to this. But in view of the rounded features this bronze may be attributed to the 17th century rather than to the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 345 The Durgā is later than the above, but it is beautifully executed. Without the bulk and the elaborate decoration this bronze would be a beautiful specimen of the art as obtained during the beginning of the 18th century A.D. The bronze representing a
Fig. 346 Devī is easily seen to be a typical example of the art of the 19th century A.D.

It remains now to illustrate the course of development the art of bronzes has had in
Fig. 347 Āndhradeśa during this period. The Somāskanda[1], ht. 75 *cm*, from Nellore town, may be said to be one of the interesting examples of the art of the 17th century A.D. In view of the fact that Nellore, like Kālahasti and Tirumalai, is not very far away from the northern border of Tamil-nāḍ, the traditions of the art of Tamil-nāḍ, as those of other aspects of life, are likely to influence those of the above mentioned places. This Somāskanda bronze illustrates this beautifully by its modelling and decoration which are akin to those of the bronzes of the last phase of the Choḷa-maṇḍalam school of the Vijayanagar period. However, the crude modelling and attenuated torsos of the figures are in the characteristic local style. This bronze may be dated to the end of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 348 The group of Vishṇu (ht. 46 *cm*), Śrīdevī (ht. 39 *cm*) and Bhūdevī (ht. 39 *cm*), from Yerrampālem in the Rajahmundry Taluk of the East Godavari District is a typical example of the art of Āndhradeśa of the period under study. It may be assigned to the middle of the 18th century, on grounds of style. A latest example of this school of
Fig. 349 Āndhradeśa is the group representing Rāma, ht. 22 *cm*, and Sītā[2], ht. 19 *cm* from Chimakūrti in the Guntur District. The stylisation that has verged on crudeness is apparent in every one of the details of these figures. This may be assigned to the end of the 18th century A.D., if not later.

SMALL ORNATE BRONZES

So far we have been examining examples of bronzes made according to the well-defined and refined traditions of the art. There are specimens of the art made according to other methods as well. These bronzes may be divided into two or three distinct categories. Of these, two important categories of bronzes may be briefly examined below. They are the small ornate bronzes and the bronzes in the folk style. In view of the uneven and irregular nature of their workmanship, these bronzes cannot be even approximately dated. If this difficulty is put aside and the pieces are studied closely,

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 106, No. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82, No. 8.

they are found to possess a charm of their own which, though archaic, is natural and of an abiding character.

A very interesting example of the group of small ornate bronzes is the Chandraśekhara[1], ht. 28 *cm*, from Vaḍakkuppoyyūr, Tanjore District. The authors of the *Catalogue* have as usual noted down the special features of this bronze. Their description of the bronze is as follows: Fig. 350

"Hands with axe, antelope; *varada* and *abhaya*. Lotus pedestal with tips of petals strongly emphasised on wide square base.

"A most unusual type of image with half-*prabhā* attached to the back of the headdress and upper arms. The crescent is conspicuous across the middle of the upper part of the headdress. A snake coils round the upper part of the arms on each side. The lower draperies are conventionalised and much ornamented, but not altogether on the usual plan. Between the *prabhā* and the head is a small halo. The face and tail of the antelope are towards Śiva."[2]

It is of interest to note that this bronze seems to resemble in workmanship the very elaborately worked and ornate Dvārapālaka (Fig. 344) in the Trichūr Museum, discussed above. Here the details are worked in a much less exuberant manner. Allowing therefore a few decades for the development of elaboration, this bronze may be dated to the early decades of the 17th century. Its modelling is, however, in the usual style and not of the bulky type of the Dvārapālaka. This is another point to be taken into account in connection with the dating of the bronze.

As regards its probable date the above mentioned authors say on p. 61 of the *Catalogue* that "the images with which it was found suggest that it is likely to be of later date." We have examined above one or two bronzes from the same place of which we have assigned the Jñānasambanda (Fig. 306) to about the first quarter of the 17th century. This is another independent piece of evidence which supports the above dating. It may be mentioned that in spite of its elaborately worked details and late date, the bronze is finished in a beautiful manner and its posture is majestic.

The standing Durgā, ht. 26 *cm*, from Pudukkuḍi in the Tanjore Taluk of the Tanjore District is also in the same style, but here the figure is bulky. The *padmāsana* and the broad square *bhadrāsana* may be seen to be clear identical with those of the above bronze. The *prabhā* of this figure is flat and has a solid appearance. Its flames and the manner they are linked by a rod are significant in that they suggest that the *prabhā* is a late Fig. 351

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

descendant of the one met with in the Naṭeśa (Fig. 294) from Belūr dated to 1510 A.D. The features of the face are crudely depicted, but the torso, ins pite of its heavy moulding, is executed well. The other interesting detail consists of the three or four strings, hanging from the waist-band, that are attached to each leg. This may be dated to the second half of the 17th century A.D. How from this period onwards, little or no atten-

Fig. 352 tion was paid to the working of the back side is known from the back view of this piece.

Fig. 353 The standing Vishāpaharaṇa, ht. 25.5 *cm*, is from Seṭṭipulam in the Tanjore District. This has been discribed by the authors of the *Catalogue* as follows on p. 108 of the book : "Axe, antelope, poison, *abhaya* (in the hands). A crude image.....with complete *prabhā*, removable from the base which is of more normal dimensions....." The *āsanas* are of the type met with in the above bronzes. The design of the *prabhā* is very poor. The modelling of the figure is similar to that of above Durgā, but the poses of the front hands and the facial features are executed better here. This bronze may therefore be assigned to about the first quarter of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 354 The bronze representing a standing Śrīnivāsa, ht. 28.5 *cm*, from Palani in the Madurai District, has also an *āsana* of the type met with in the above mentioned bronzes. This is rather a strange coincidence suggesting that either the tradition relating to the making of such bronzes prescribes this type of *āsanas* for them or that they all belong almost to the same period when it was the practise to provide this type of *āsanas* for such bronzes. In view of the apparent difference, met with between the bronzes, in the treatment of their other details, that the latter is not probable, and that the former is only plausible is also known from the difference in the provenances of the bronzes. Its half-*prabhā* is simple. But the elaborate shoulder ornaments, the peculiar manner of showing the hair spread-out on either side of the head, the imperfect modelling of the limbs and the unsatisfactory manner of depicting the features of the face go to show that this is much later than the above one. Another bronze representing Kāliya-kṛishṇa (Fig. 338), from the place has already been noticed and it is dated to the middle of the 18th century. This bronze may also be dated to the same period.

Fig. 355 The standing Vishṇu, ht. 45 *cm*, from Ēḷumagaḷūr in the Māyūram Taluk of the Tanjore District is a very interesting figure. Its *padmāsana* is of the type seen in the above bronzes, but the *bhadrāsana* is of the type usually associated with the bronzes in the refined style belonging to very late periods. It does not also seem to fit properly into the scheme of the figure. It is therefore possible that it is a later-day substitute for the original *āsana*. The *prabhā* is very ornate and its three-fourth circle sits on the props seen on either side of Vishṇu. The modelling of the figure and the rendering of

the features are somewhat good. But the highly developed character of the ornamentation is at once recognised in the number of ends of the waist-band and that of the strings that hang down and attached to the legs as well as from the manner in which they have been done. The other interesting details to be noted are the acquiline nose and the halo behind the *makuṭa* with a wide top. This type of *makuṭa* is characteristic of the art of Keraḷa of the 17th–18th centuries A.D. The reason for its occurrence here is a matter to be investigated. On the basis of the style, this bronze may be assigned to about the second half or the end of the 18th century A.D.

The standing goddess probably Pārvatī, ht. 65 *cm*, from Pudūr East, in the Tiru- Fig. 356
cheṅgoḍu Taluk of Salem District, is another interesting and beautiful specimen of this category of bronzes. It will be found to be somewhat akin to the Durgā (Fig. 345) in the Trichūr Museum in style, but here the details are more and their workmanship is very ornate. Moreover, its facial features and the halo behind the crown are closely related to those of the above Vishṇu. Hence this may be dated to about 1800 A.D. The sensuous modelling of the breasts, the long file of bangles on the wrists and elaborately worked flowing draperies are noteworthy.

The standing Durgā,[1] ht. 24 *cm*, found along with a number of small bronzes in folk Fig. 357
style to be dealt with below from Naikuppam in the Tiruppattur Taluk of the Ramanathapuram District and the Chandraśekhara,[2] ht. 17 *cm*, from Kārappiḍāgai in the Fig. 358
Tanjore District, may be said to occupy a place, in regard to the style, between the above group of bronzes and the group of bronzes to be dealt with below. The Durgā is somewhat better finished than the Chandraśekhara, although both are of the crude and uncanonical type of bronzes. They may be dated to about the beginning of the 19th century, on the basis of their style.

BRONZES IN THE FOLK STYLE

Now we shall examine a few typical examples of the art belonging to this very interesting category of bronzes. A majority of the bronzes to be discussed below come from two places namely Kārappiḍāgai, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam Taluk, Tanjore District and Naikkuppam, Tiruppattur Taluk, Ramanathapuram District.[3] About these pieces the authors of the *Catalogue*, say as follows:—

" All images from the former of these finds and all but one of these from the latter, are more or less crude, many of them extremely so (see Pl. XXIII); and their physiognomy, especially in the latter find, is suggestive of that characteristic of primitive village gods

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 120, No. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 102, No. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

rather than of the more cultured style of image with which this catalogue chiefly deals. That the Naikuppam find at least was connected with a *grāma-devatā* shrine is further indicated by the fact that about half the images in it represent Aiyanār's attendants. The only figure of Aiyanār himself from this find is the only one which is really well executed, and this in spite of the fact that it is also the smallest." [1]

Fig. 359 Amongst this class of bronzes the worshipper, ht. 16 *cm*, from Vaḍakkupaṇaiyūr in the Tanjore District may be considered somewhat better executed than the rest, except for the tiered arrangement of the garment and the unnatural manner of bending the right leg. The face is elongate and there seems to be a beard. Its features are well worked. This may be dated to about the second half of 18th century A.D.

In view of the fact that the Naikuppam bronzes are in general more interesting both in workmanship and in the variety of themes, than the Kārappiḍāgai bronzes, the former may be examined first.

Fig. 360 Of these the Madurai-vīraṇ [2], ht. 11.5 *cm*, takes precedence over others in view of its nearly cultured style. Even so, the modelling of the legs is crude and the eyes and the nose are not treated well. The knotting of the hair to right is noteworthy. It
Fig. 361 may belong to about 1800 A.D. The Saṅgilik-karuppaṇ [3], ht. 17 *cm*, seems to come next to the above in regard to its proportions and delineation of the details. The beaded necklace, the fetters on the legs with chains attached to them and the headdress of
Fig. 362 this bronze are interesting. The Karuppaṇṇasvāmi [4], ht. 23 *cm*, shows the characteristics of the folk style such as the applique nipples and necklace, sharply tapering limbs and bulging out of the part between the armpits and knees. The expression suggests seriousness. The simple garment and the ornament of a novel type seen on both shoulders are also interesting. These two may also belong to about 1800 A.D.

Fig. 363 The Yaśodā-kṛishṇa [5], ht. 20 *cm*, is modelled in the same manner as the above figure. The nipples here also are of the applique type, and the breasts are beautifully represented. She holds a rather beautiful lotus in her right hand and the baby Kṛishṇa by her left hand. Interestingly she wears the hair in the manner in which the goddesses of the Kṛishṇa group (Fig. 328) from Sermādevi wear. The drapery with numerous folds and a pair of festoons, hanging one on either side, are also special features of this bronze. Baby Kṛishṇa, true to the folk style, possesses long tube-like limbs, but the arrangement of his hair is remarkably similar to that of the crawling Bāla-kṛishṇa

[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (14).
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (13).
[3] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (12).
[4] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (14).
[5] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (16).

(Fig. 314) discussed above. The nose has begun to protrude and the face has begun to assume an unshapely roundish form, which becomes very ugly in the other bronzes. It may be dated to the beginning of the 19th century A.D.

The Vishṇu [1], ht 22 *cm*, and Durgā [2], ht. 22.5 *cm*, are both in the same style as the above two bronzes with this difference that here the details are executed more crudely than there. This is known from the manner in which the draperies, the arms, the headgears and the emblems of both the figures are done. Interestingly the Vishṇu's *yajñopavīta* is worn in the *prāchīnā-vīti* fashion. The noses of the figures are pointed and the eyes are of the applique type. The breasts of Durgā are however nicely depicted. These two may be assigned to the first quarter the 19th century A.D. Fig. 364 Fig. 365

The standing Aiyanār [3], ht. 8.5. *cm*, locality not known, is still cruder in style as exemplified by the garment with tiers of protruding folds, incompletely chastened body and the summary manner of depicting the *jaṭā-bhāra*. The facial features are however better executed, and the posture is full of feeling. Its date may be the same as that of the above. Fig. 366

Now we shall examine the bronzes from Kārappiḍāgai. Of these the worshipper [4], ht. 9.5 *cm*, is better than the rest. Its slender build, garment with thick folds and the fine expression are noteworthy. It may belong to about 1800 A.D. The Kāḷī [5], ht. *cm*, is a typical example of this style and it may be said to be an excellent specimen where all the conceivable items of a crude style are present in a perfect manner. This factor, however, makes one laugh rather than scoff at the maker of this bronze which is, however, a fine study of the subject in this style. It may also be dated to about 1800 A.D. The figure of another *grāma-devatā* [6], ht. 10 *cm*, shares a majority of its details with the above Kāḷī, but here the rendering of the arms and the nose is still more crude. It may be dated to the first quarter of the 19th century A.D. Still further emphasis on crudeness is exhibited by the *grāma-devatā* [7], ht. 11 *cm*. In addition, it has a terrified expression as suggested by wide open eyes and the knitting of the brows. A similar but slender bronze, ht. about 14 *cm*, representing a *grāma-devatā*, holding a trident in the right hand, is from the Kūḍal Aḻagar temple at Madurai. The rendering of the hair and the nose and eyes is noteworthy. A very interesting bronze, though extremely crudely finished, is the figure representing a *grāma-devatā*, locality not known. Its face, torso, draperies and arms are all treated in a specially unrefined manner. Yet there is something attracting in the representation, which elicits admiration. The above three bronzes may be assigned to the first quarter of the 19th century A.D. The extreme limits in this style seems Fig. 367 Fig. 368 Fig. 369 Fig. 370 Fig. 371 Fig. 372

[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (9).
[2] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (11).
[3] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (3).
[4] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (8).
[5] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (6).
[6] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (7).
[7] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIII (2).

Fig. 373 to have been reached in the Yaśodā-kṛishṇa, locality not known, although, here the breasts alone are remarkably well depicted. A specially noteworthy feature of this piece is that its eyes are depicted by cavities rather than by the applique method. This may also belong to the first quarter of the 19th century A.D.

The bronzes examined above are noteworthy for their technique and style. They are cast, like the bronze Varadarāja (Fig. 342), with "an unstable vacuolated core."[1] This, coupled with the small size of the bronzes, shows that they have been made in the villages by the village craftsmen for worship in the village shrines. These specimens are therefore marked by rustic simplicity.

The style of these pretty little bronzes is interesting. Even at the first sight of them, one can recognise that their style is closely allied to that of terra-cottas. Though the subject-matter has been taken from the religious traditions of the sophisticated, which suggests that these traditions have been universal in their character, the singularity of the style of these bronzes shows that the village craftsmen have also made valuable contributions to the Indian artistic traditions in general, which have become richer by these contributions. The manner in which the themes have been given forms is characteristic of the huge terra-cotta figures which can be seen in every South Indian village even to-day. Just as the simple folk ballad and music which have been delighting generations of villagers from time immemorial, who would not brook even a slight tempering with them, their works of art also, in a simple style seem to have been giving them soul-satisfying pleasure, and they cannot, therefore, be happy if the style of their works of art is changed. So what Mr. Ajit Mookerjee says about the art of the Ādivāsis seems to be true of the folk art of the villagers, of which the above bronzes represent one branch. He says:[2] "The exact reason behind this phenomenon is difficult to explain. But it is evident that once the aesthetic awareness of the Ādivāsis is evoked by a pattern, it tends to resist any significant modification. In communities living in isolation, where tradition is passed on by oral transmission and technical skill is handed down from mother to daughter or father to son, there is little scope for modification in the traditional forms and *motifs*."[2] He goes on to say: "Many of their art forms are results of deep spiritual experience, the innate meanings of which cannot be clearly understood in terms of our aesthetic reactions. The age-old emotional content conditioned by the environment and social behaviour has contributed a mass of significance to these art forms." They are above all objects of veneration which in its height of intensity transcends the *nāma* (name or subject) and *rūpa* (form). Thus, the style of these bronzes, though unrefined from a different angle, has got the sanctity of age-old traditions and the works, in that style, possess the rare significance of ennobling the multitudes of simple-minded villagers and elevating them to a high state of spiritual experience which is but the goal of every noble and creative activity of the humanity in general.

[1] *Catalogue*, p. 69.

[2] *Indian Tribal Art*, in Traveller in India (issued on behalf of the Department of Tourism, Government of India) Vol. V, No. 2, p. 15.

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ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Page 1	line 9	*for* abunduntly	*read* abundantly
„ 4	„ 23	*before* the	*add* of
„ 7	„ 17	*for* there is	*read* there are
„ 8	„ 1	„ to the extant	„ to the extent
„ 10	„ 26	„ was in vogue	„ were in vogue
„ 12	„ 23	*after* the Nilgiris	*add* may be examined
„ 17	„ 22	*for* sātavāhana	*read* Sātavāhana
„ 19	„ 17	„ may dated	„ may be dated
„ 21	„ 6	„ and which are	„ and the workmanship of which is
„ 31	„ 34	„ faccs	„ faces
„ 33	„ 16	„ while its	„ while their
„ 42	„ 7	„ ovid	„ ovoid
„ 42	„ 37	„ met within	„ met with in
„ 44	„ 32	„ alredy	„ already
„ 48	„ 11	„ pleated	„ plaited
„ 55	„ 10	„ rythm	„ rhythm
„ 60	„ 8	„ (*c.* 630–68 A.D.)	„ (c. 668–700 A.D.)
„ 62	„ 11	*after* it is	*add* here
„ 73	„ 11	*for* it being	*read* it is
„ 73	„ 16	„ show	„ shows
„ 83	„ 33	„ elegant by	„ elegantly
„ 87	„ 26	„ as in	„ as that of
„ 87	„ 27	„ of its	„ of the latter's
„ 89	„ 5	„ lowermost arm	„ lowermost right arm
„ 103	„ 1	„ as accordingly	„ are accordingly
„ 119	„ 7	„ face in	„ face is
„ 123	„ 5	„ eg	„ leg
„ 129	„ 24	„ refrined	„ refined
„ 140	„ 28	„ is the Tanjore District in	„ in the Tanjore District is
„ 147	„ 25	„ noticed. One	„ noticed, one
„ 162	„ 7	„ So	„ But
„ 162	„ 8	*delete* (Fig. 65)	
„ 164	„ 31	*for* wrtten	*read* written
„ 171	„ 31	„ of the neck	„ on the neck
„ 177	„ 8	„ margical	„ marginal
„ 188	„ 23	„ is seen	„ are also seen

Page 207	line 24	*for* bronzes	*read* bronze
„ 208	„ 37	„ An short	„ A short
„ 210	„ 36	„ band	„ bend
„ 212	„ 23	„ their capaity	„ the capacity
„ 219	„ 23	„ The whirling	„ There are the whirling
„ 232	„ 1	*after* those	*add* of
„ 234	„ 11	„ as well as	„ well
„ 236	„ 27	„ above	„ are
„ 243	„ 28	*for* are apparent	*read* is apparent
„ 243	„ 35	„ other figure	„ other figures
„ 250	„ 21	„ except	„ but
„ 258	„ 5	„ items	„ item
„ 258	„ 12	„ *jaṭā*	„ *jaṭās*
„ 262	„ 17	„ ankle	„ ankles
„ 263	„ 24	„ are apparent	„ is apparent
„ 266	„ 21	„ disphanous	„ diaphanous
„ 269	„ 35	*after* in the other	*add* items
„ 300	„ 28	*for* tinty curls	*read* tiny curls
„ 305	„ 33	„ ia]	„ is]
„ 310	„ 18	„ there is	„ there are
„ 319	„ 24	*after* modelling	*add* is
„ 333	„ 36	*for* the Naṭeśa	*read* The other Naṭeśa
„ 334	„ 12	*after vājī-bandha*	*add* is noteworthy
„ 349	„ 30	„ instead	„ of
„ 351	„ 16	*for* (Fig. 327)	*read* (Fig. 328)
„ 352	„ 5	„ proclaim	„ proclaims
„ 352	„ 21	„ 18th century	„ 17th century
„ 355	„ 31	„ clear	„ clearly

PLATES

PLATE I.

Fig. 1. Figurine of goddess (?), Ādichanallūr, Tirunelveli District; an early piece.

Fig. 2. Bronze bowl, Nilgiris; about the last centuries before Christ.

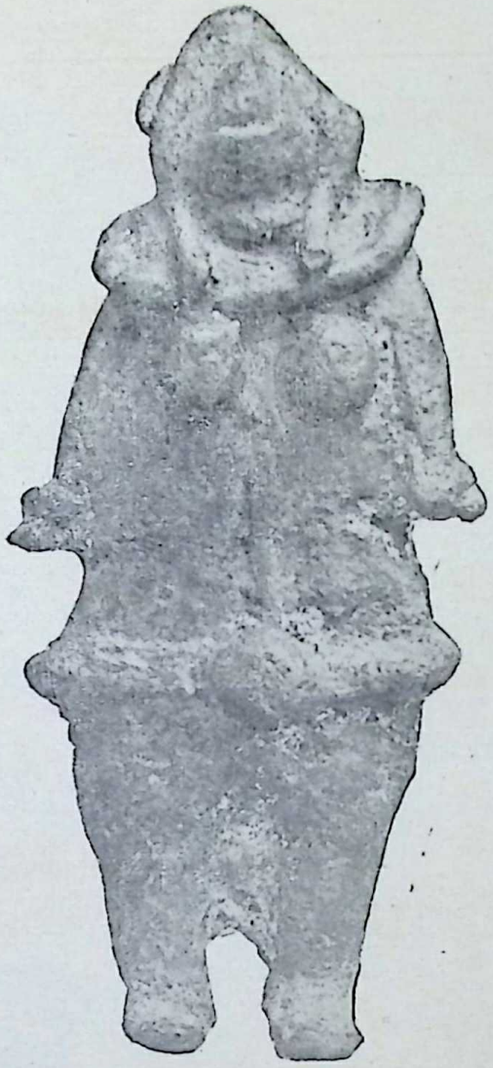

Fig. 1

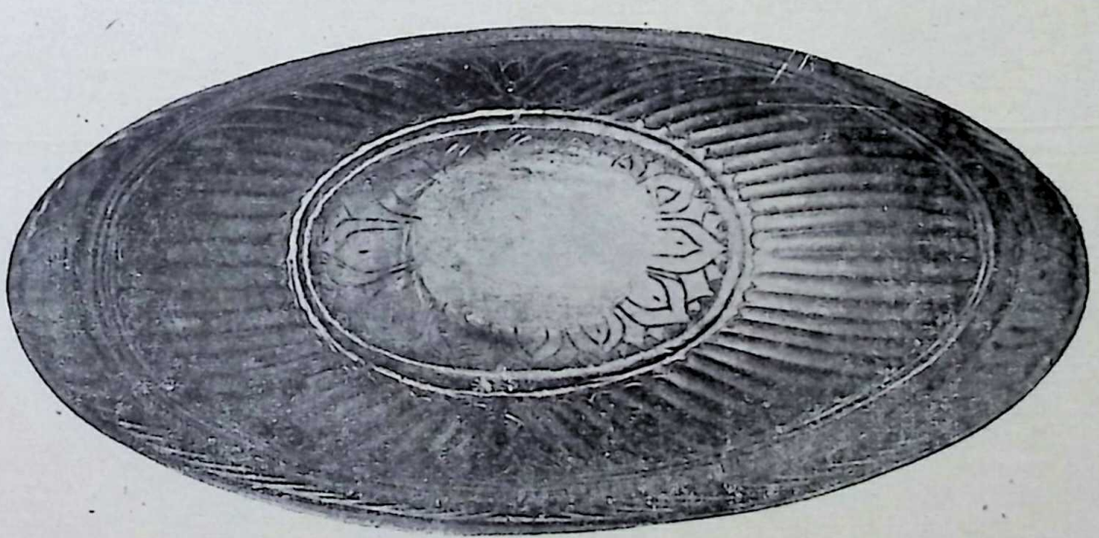

Fig. 2

PLATE II.

Fig. 3. Elephant on a Pāṇḍya (?) cast coin, locality not known; about the early centuries A.D.

Fig. 4. Elephant (Naḷagiri ?) on a marble medallion, Amarāvatī, Guntur District; about 2nd century A.D.

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

PLATE III.

Fig. 5. Buddha (headless), standing, Amarāvatī; about the 2nd half of the 4th century A.D.

Fig. 6. Buddha (damaged), standing, Amarāvatī; about 400 A.D.

Fig. 7. Head of Buddha, Amarāvatī; about 400 A.D.

Fig. 8. Buddha, standing, Buddhapāḍ, Guntur District; now in the British Museum, London; early 5th century A.D.

Fig. 7

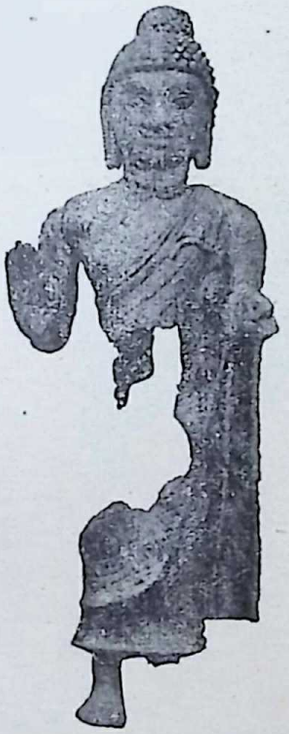

Fig. 6

Fig. 5

Fig. 8

PLATE IV.

Fig. 9. Buddha, standing, Amarāvatī ; about 500 A.D.

Fig. 10. Buddha, standing, Buddhapāḍ ; now in the British Museum, London ; about the end of the 5th century A.D.

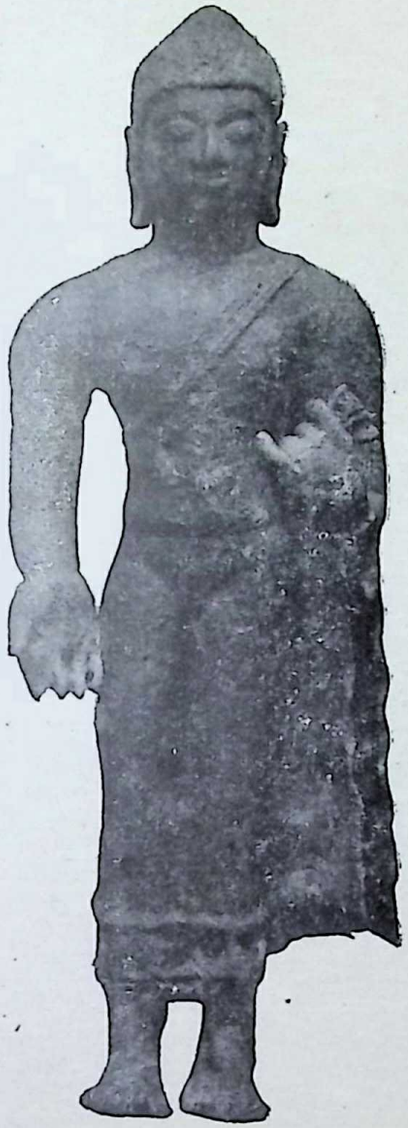

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

PLATE V.

Fig. 11. Buddha, standing, Buddhapāḍ; in the British Museum, London; first half of the 6th century A.D.

Fig. 11

PLATE VI.

Figs. 12 & 12A. Hands of Buddha (?), Buddhapāḍ; in the British Museum, London; about the middle of the 6th century A.D.

Fig. 13. Votive Stūpa, Buddhapāḍ; in the same institution; about the 6th century A.D.

Fig. 14. Pedestal (of a Buddha ?), Buddhapāḍ; in the same institution; about the 6th century A.D.

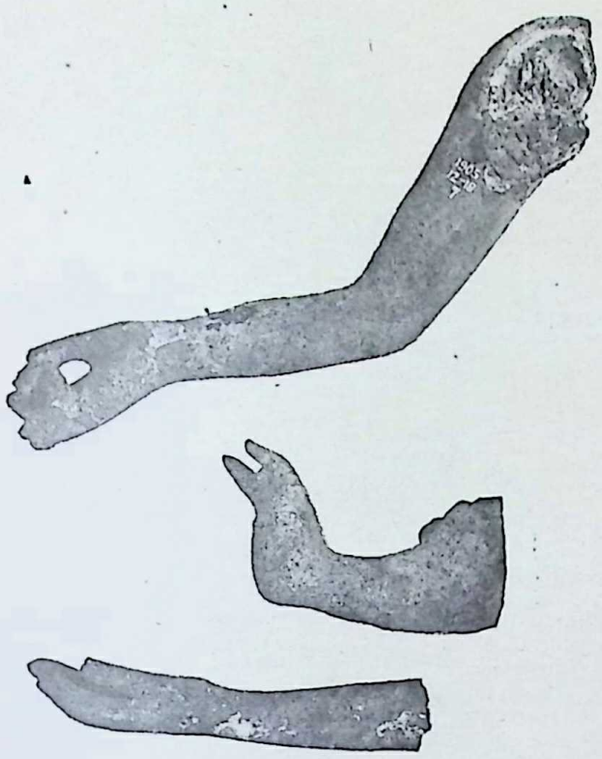

Fig. 12

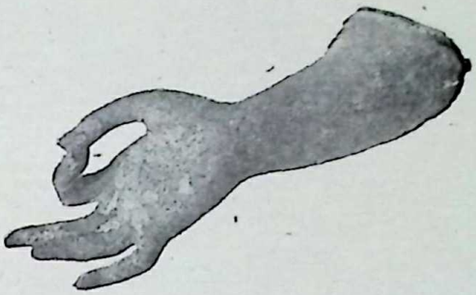

Fig. 12A

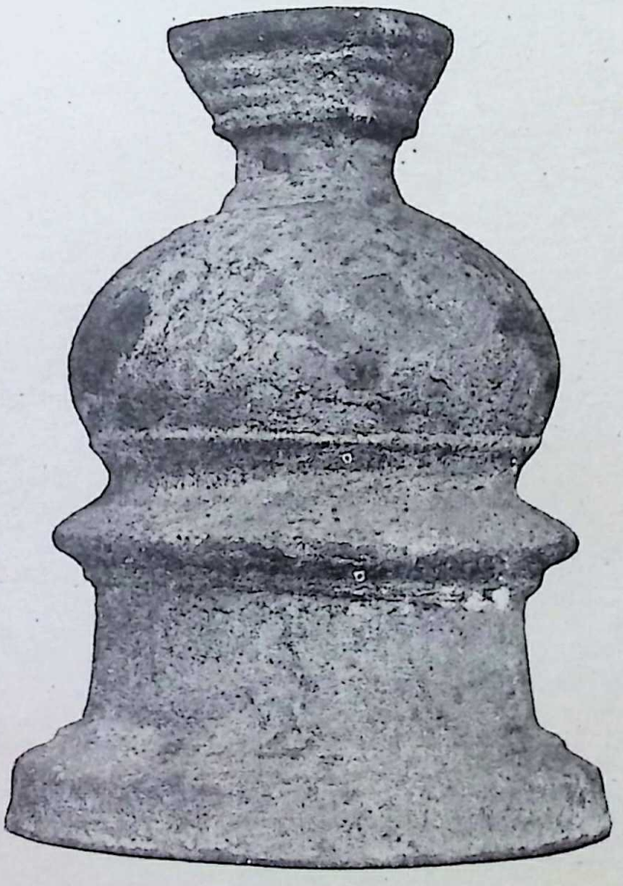

Fig. 13

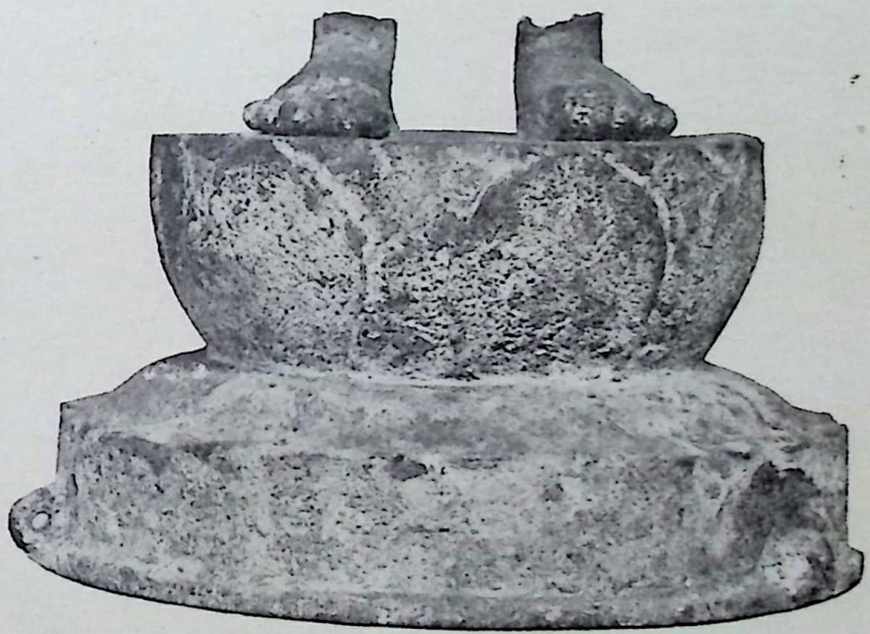

Fig. 14

PLATE VII.

Fig. 15. Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa, standing, Peruntoṭṭam, Tanjore District; in the Tanjore Art Gallery; middle or second half of the 8th century A.D.

Fig. 16. Rear view of above.

Fig. 17. Vishṇu, standing, Peruntoṭṭam, Tanjore District; in the same institution; about 800 A.D.

Fig. 18. Rear view of above.

Fig. 15

Fig. 16

Fig. 17

Fig. 18

PLATE VIII.

Fig. 19. Vishṇu as Varadarāja (?), seated, (Shiyāli-Māyavaram region, Tanjore District ?) ; now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta ; about the beginning of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 20. Rear view of above.

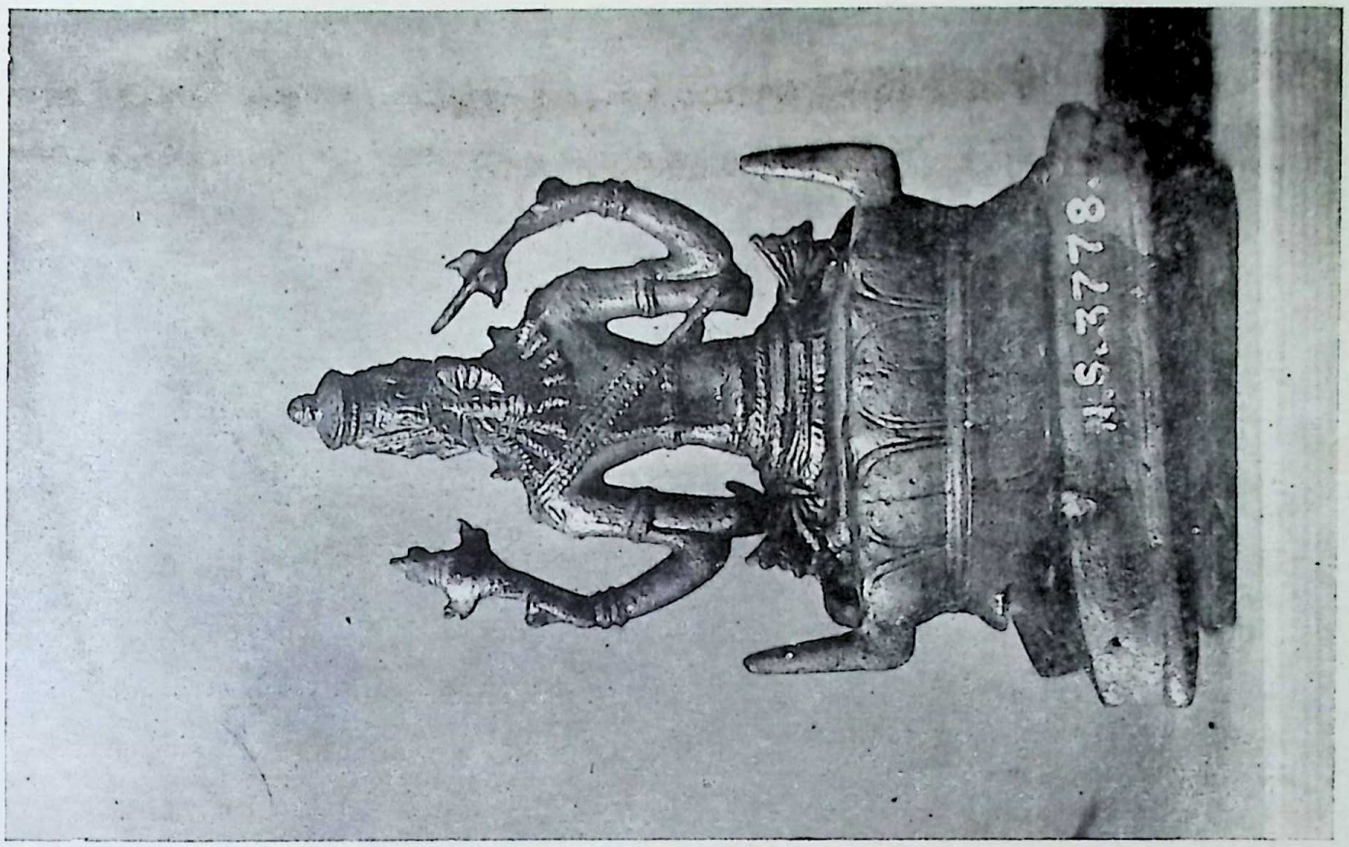

Fig. 20

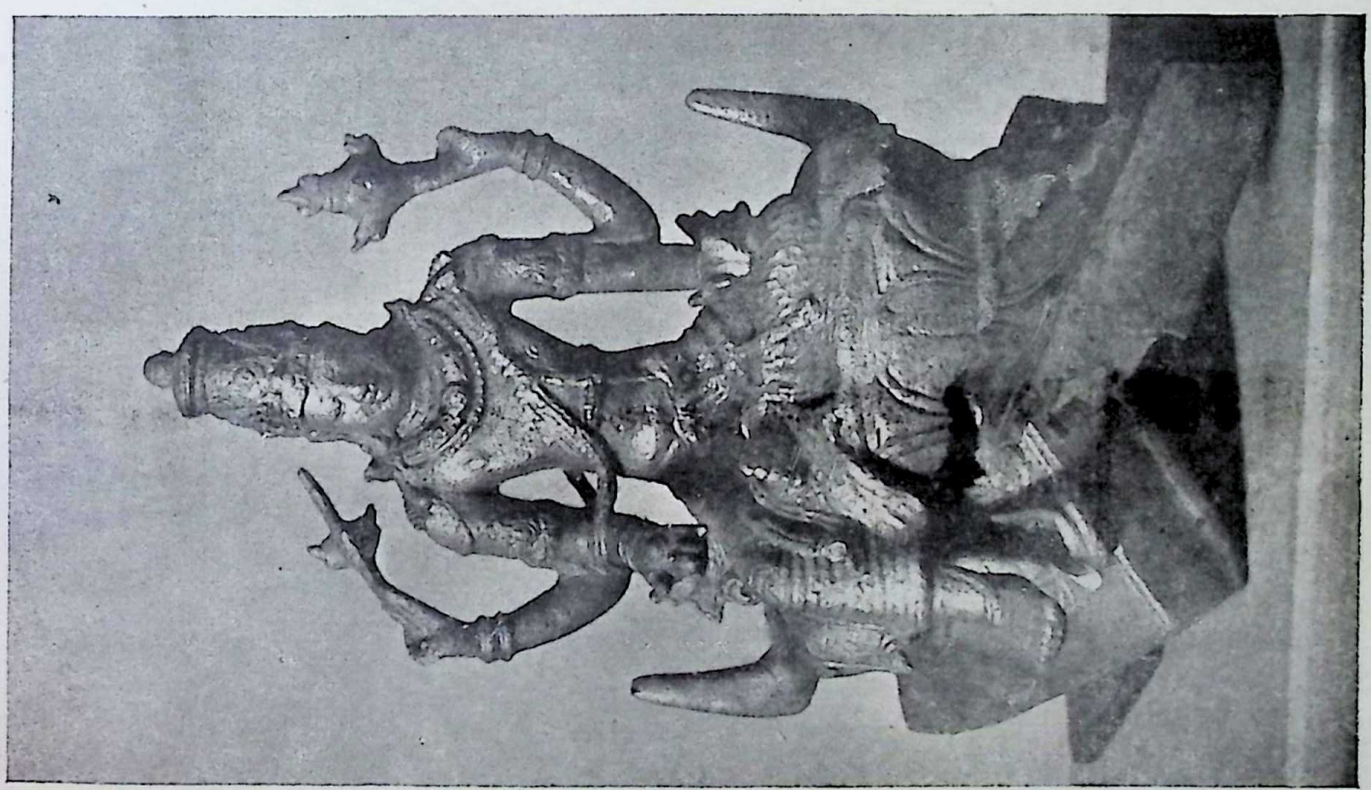

Fig. 19

PLATE IX.

Fig. 21. Vishṇu as Śrīnivāsa, standing, locality not known; now in the Trivandrum Museum; early 9th century A.D.

Fig. 22. Rear view of above.

Fig. 23. Vishṇu, standing, Vaḷuduḍaiyūr, Tiruchirapalli District; slightly later than the above.

Fig. 24. Rear view of above.

Fig. 21

Fig. 22

Fig. 23

Fig. 24

PLATE X.

Fig. 25. Vishṇu, standing, locality not known; about the 2nd quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 26. Rear view of above.

Fig. 25

Fig. 26

PLATE XI.

Fig. 27. Four-armed deity, standing, locality not known; now in the Trivandrum Museum; about the second quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 27

PLATE XII.

Fig. 28. Maitreya (copper-gilt), standing, Melayūr, Tanjore District; about the middle of the 9th century A. D.

Fig. 29. Rear view of above.

Fig. 28

Fig. 29

PLATE XIII.

Fig. 30. Vishṇu, standing, Peruntoṭṭam, Tanjore District; in the Tanjore Art Gallery; about the end of the second quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 31. Rear view of above.

Fig. 30

Fig. 31

PLATE XIV.

Fig. 32. Tripurāntaka, standing, locality not known ; in a private collection ; about the middle of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 33. Rear view of above.

Fig. 32

Fig. 33

PLATE XV.

Fig. 34. Naṭeśa, Kūram, Chingleput District; about the third quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 35. Rear view of above.

Fig. 35

Fig. 34

PLATE XVII.

Fig. 37. Rear view of Fig. 36.

Fig. 38. Vishāpaharaṇa, Kīḻappūḍanūr, Tanjore District; slightly later than the above.

Fig. 39. Rear view of above.

Fig. 37

Fig. 38

Fig. 39

PLATE XVIII.

Fig. 38A. Detail of Fig. 38.

Fig. 38 A

PLATE XIX.

Fig. 40. Vīṇādharamūrti, locality not known; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery; the date same as of Fig. 38.

Fig. 41. Rear view of above.

Fig. 42. Śiva (of Umāsahita group?), seated, locality not known; now in the same institution; about the beginning of the last quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 43. Rear view of above.

Fig. 40

Fig. 41

Fig. 42

Fig. 43

PLATE XX.

Fig. 44. Kirātamūrti, Tiruveṭkaḷam, near Chidambaram, South Arcot District; in the Śiva temple there; about the last quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Fig. 44

PLATE XXI.

Fig. 45. Rear view of Fig. 44.

Fig. 45

PLATE XXII.

Fig. 46. Arjuna, from the same place as Fig. 44; date same as of Fig. 44.

Fig. 47. Rear view of above.

Fig. 46

Fig. 47

PLATE XXIII.

Fig. 48. Naṭeśa, locality not known; now in the Bank of Italy, Rome; about 900 A.D.

Fig. 49. Simhanāda or Lokeśvara, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 48.

Fig. 50. Rear view of above.

Fig. 48

Fig. 49

Fig. 50

PLATE XXIV.

Fig. 51. Naṭeśa, Nallūr, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the beginning of the 10th century A.D.

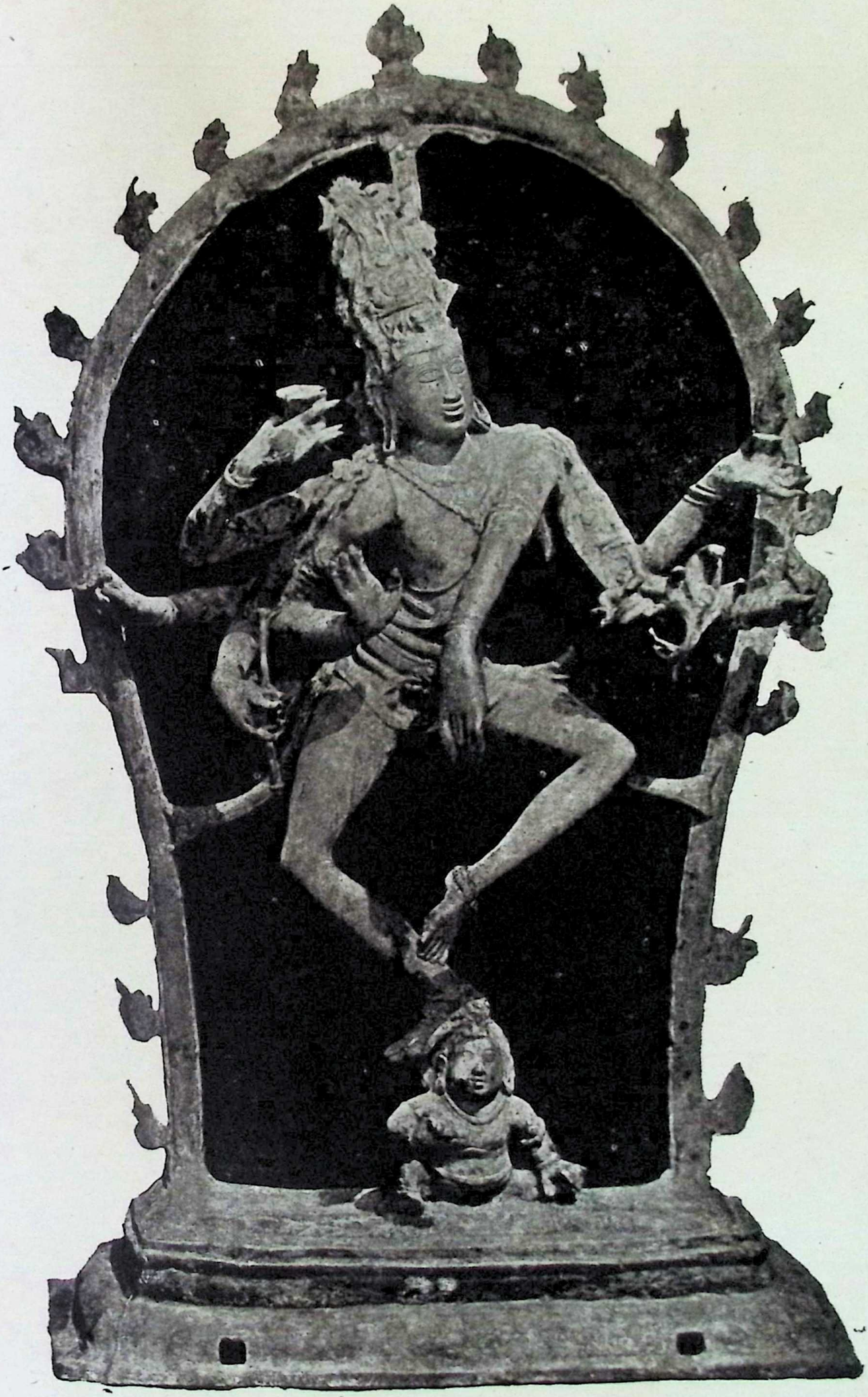

Fig. 51

PLATE XXV.

Fig. 52. Rear view of Fig. 51.

Fig. 52

PLATE XXVI.

Fig. 53. Trivikrama, Siṅgānallūr, Coimbatore District; in the Vishṇu temple there; date same as of Fig. 51.

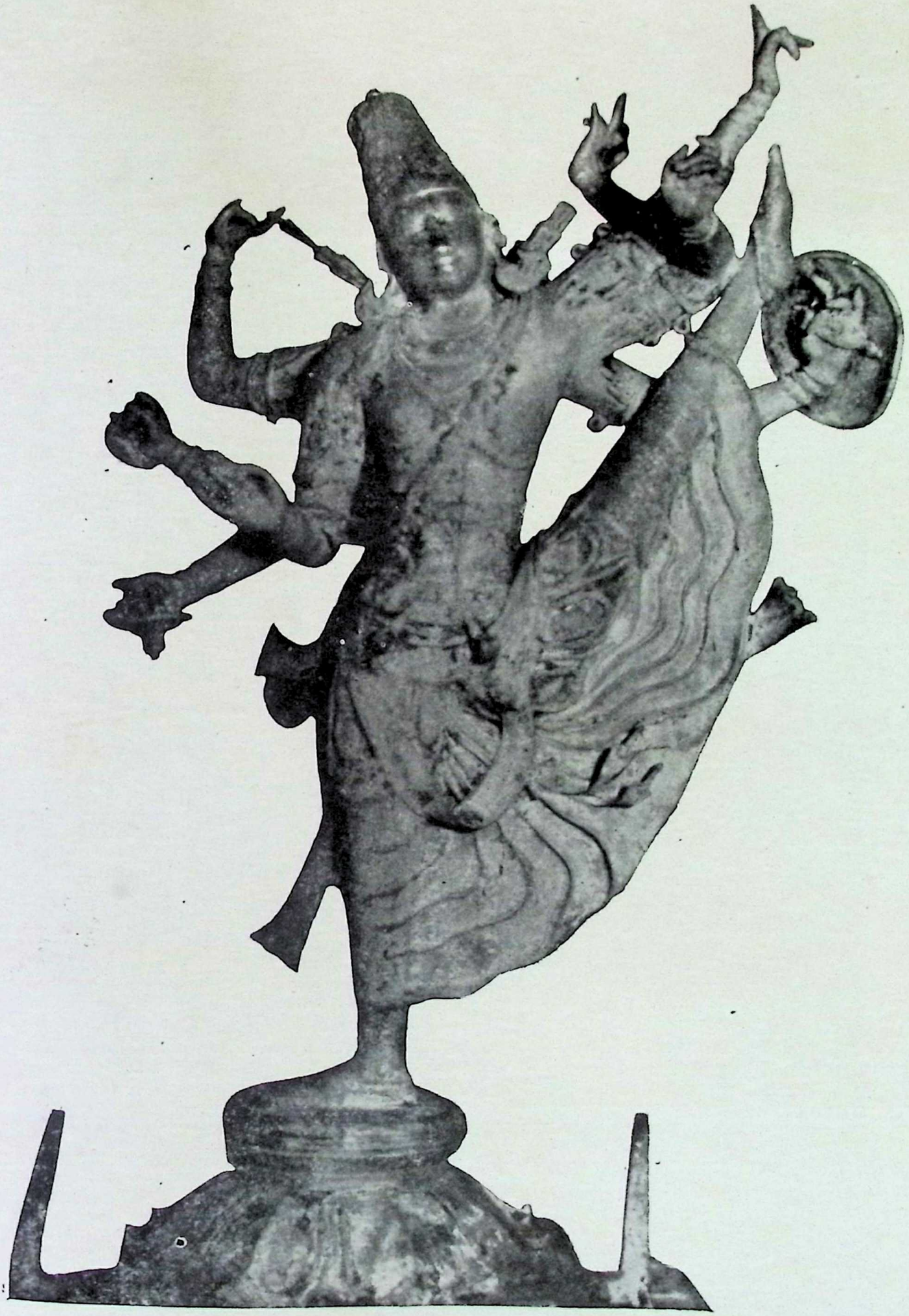

Fig. 53

PLATE XXVII.

Fig. 54. Naṭeśa, Poruppūmettuppaṭṭi, Madurai District; date same as of Fig. 53.

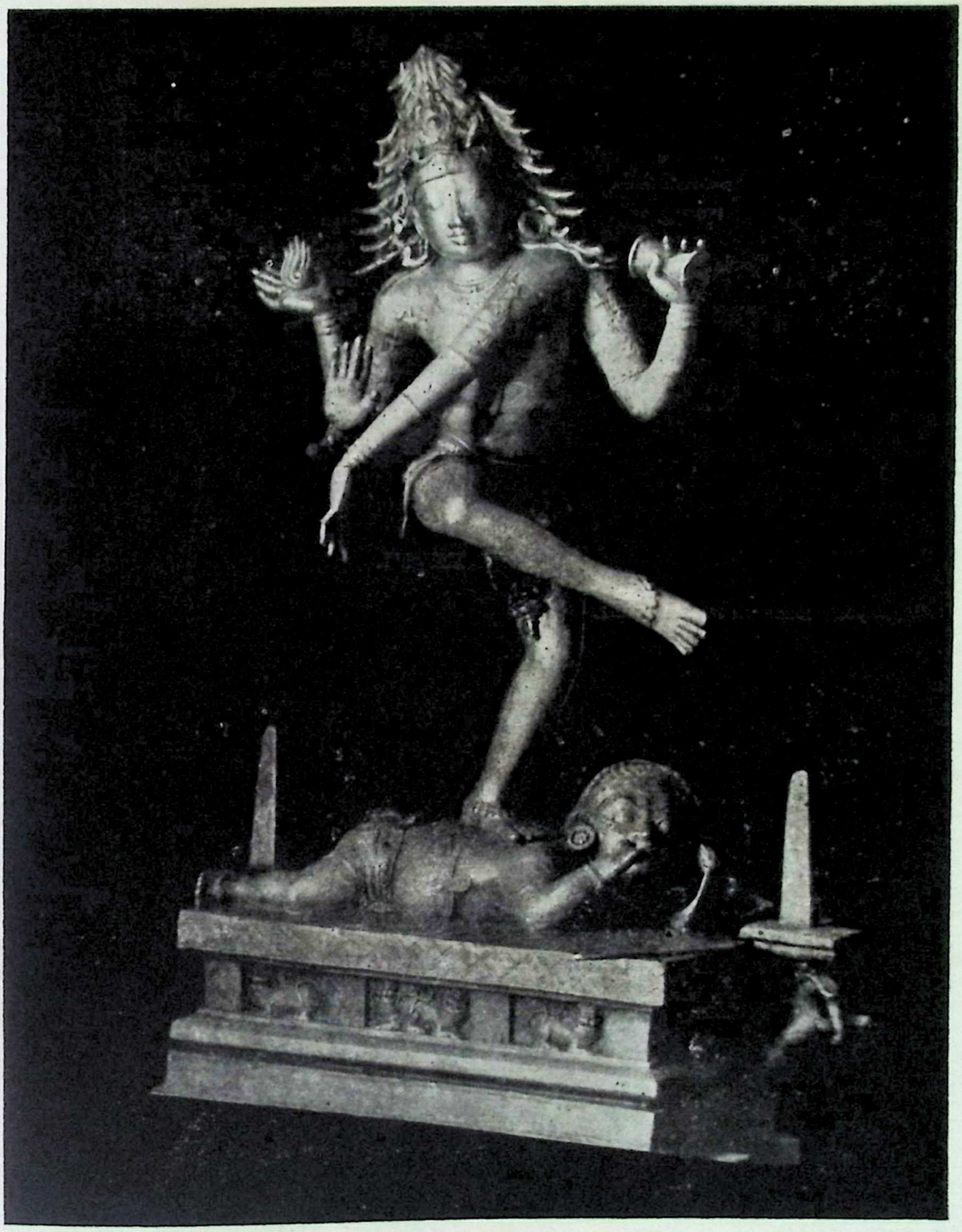

Fig. 54

PLATE XXVIII.

Fig. 55. Rear view of Fig. 54.

Fig. 55

PLATE XXIX.

Fig. 56. Viṇādhara, Belūr, Salem District; about the first quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 57. Rear view of above.

Fig. 58. Buddha, standing, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 56.

Fig. 56

Fig. 57

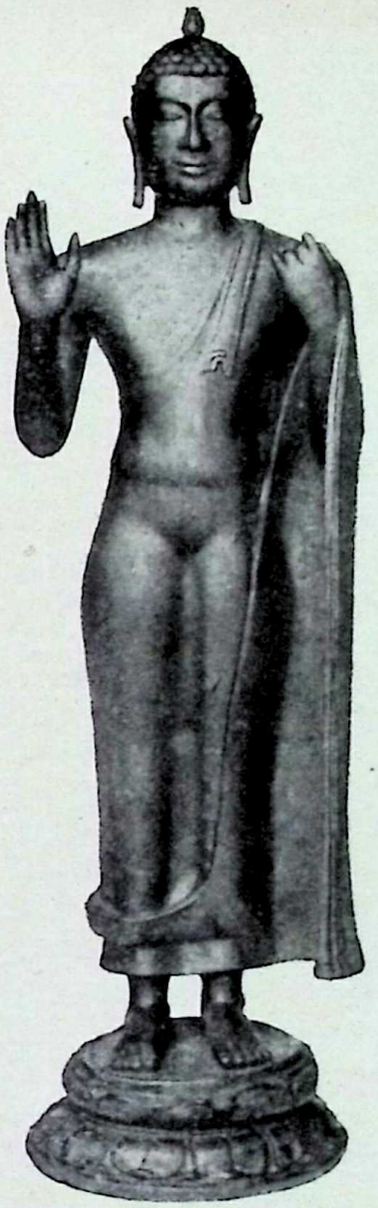

Fig. 58

PLATE XXX.

Fig. 59. Goddess (Pārvatī ?), locality not known ; now in the Freer Art Gallery, Washington D.C. (U.S.A.) ; about the first quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 60. Rear view of above.

Fig. 61. Subrahmaṇya, Kīḻaiyūr, Tanjore District ; now probably in the Śiva temple there ; date same as of Fig. 59.

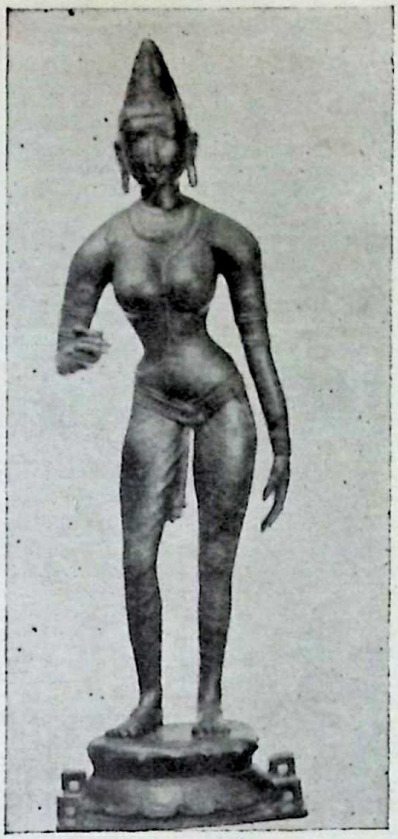

Fig. 59

Fig. 60

Fig. 61

PLATE XXXI.

Fig. 62. Vīṇādhara, Tiruppurambiyam, Tanjore District; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery; about the beginning of the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 63. Rear view of above.

Fig. 62

Fig. 63

PLATE XXXII.

Fig. 64. Kāḷiya-kṛishṇa, locality not known; in a private collection in Madras; date same as of Fig. 62.

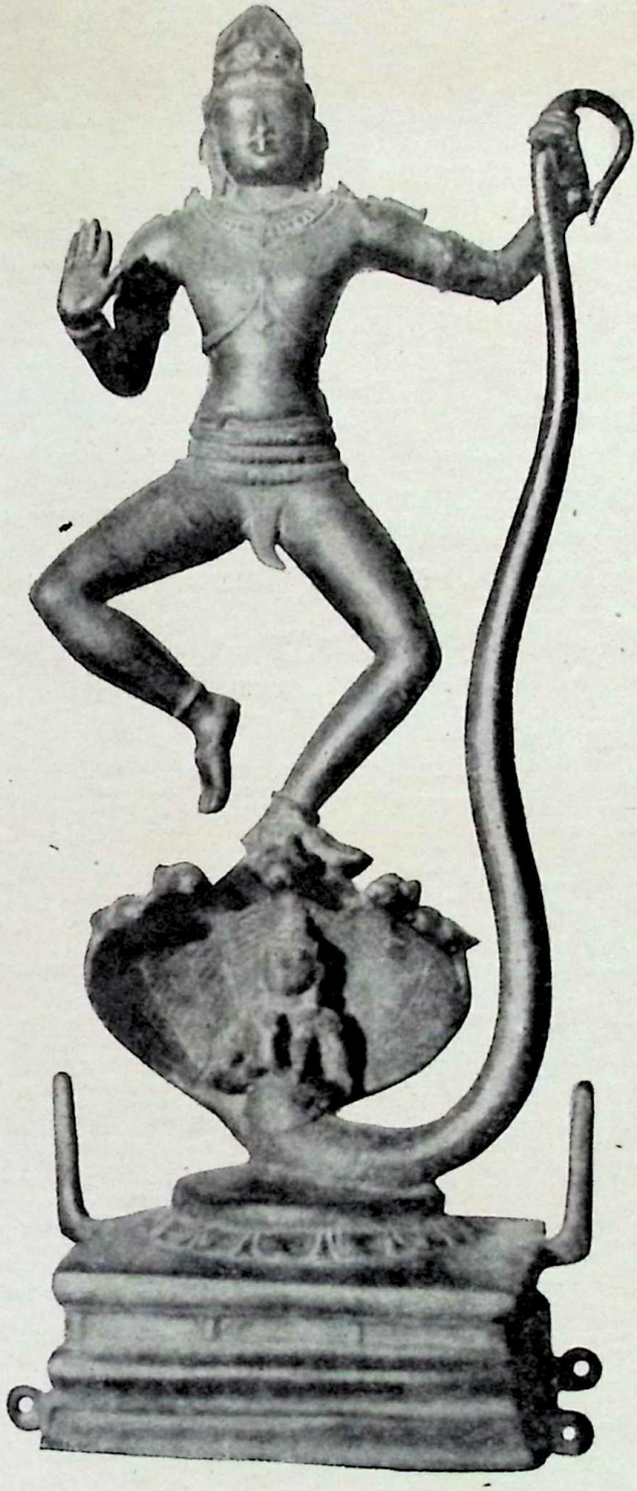

Fig. 64

PLATE XXXIII.

Fig. 65. Tripurāntaka; Taṇḍarttoṭṭam, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 66. Rear view of above.

Fig. 65

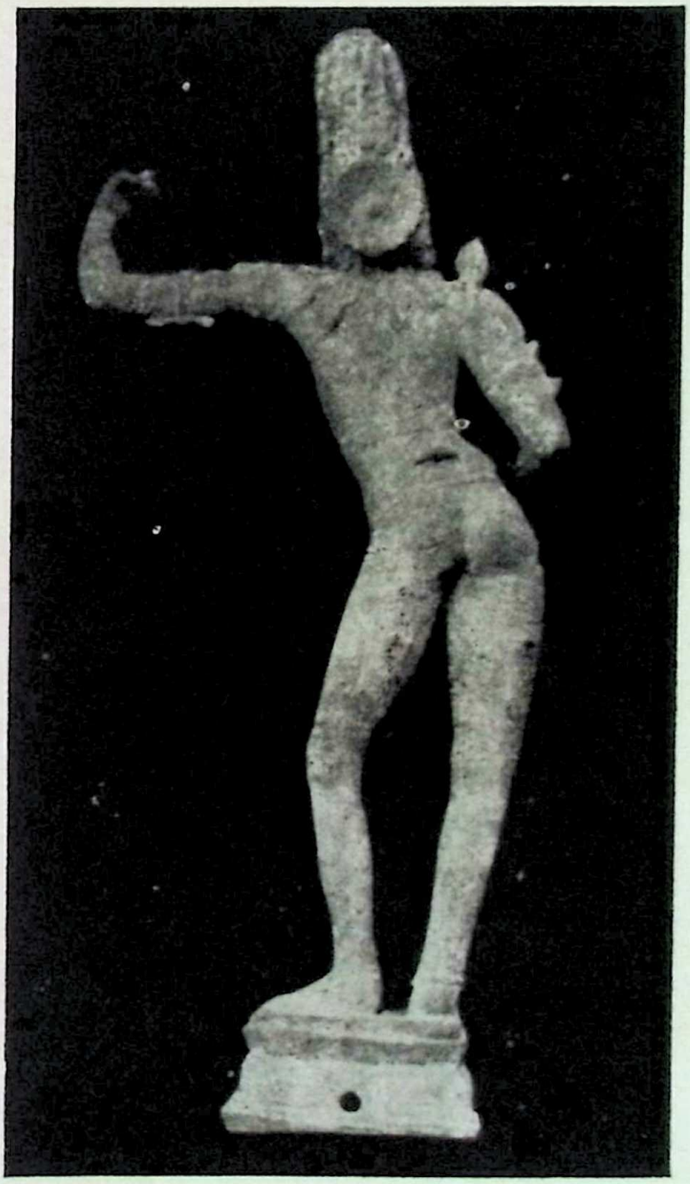

Fig. 66

PLATE XXXIV.

Fig. 67. Śiva as Vṛishabhavāhana: in the same place as of Fig. 65; date same as of Fig. 65.

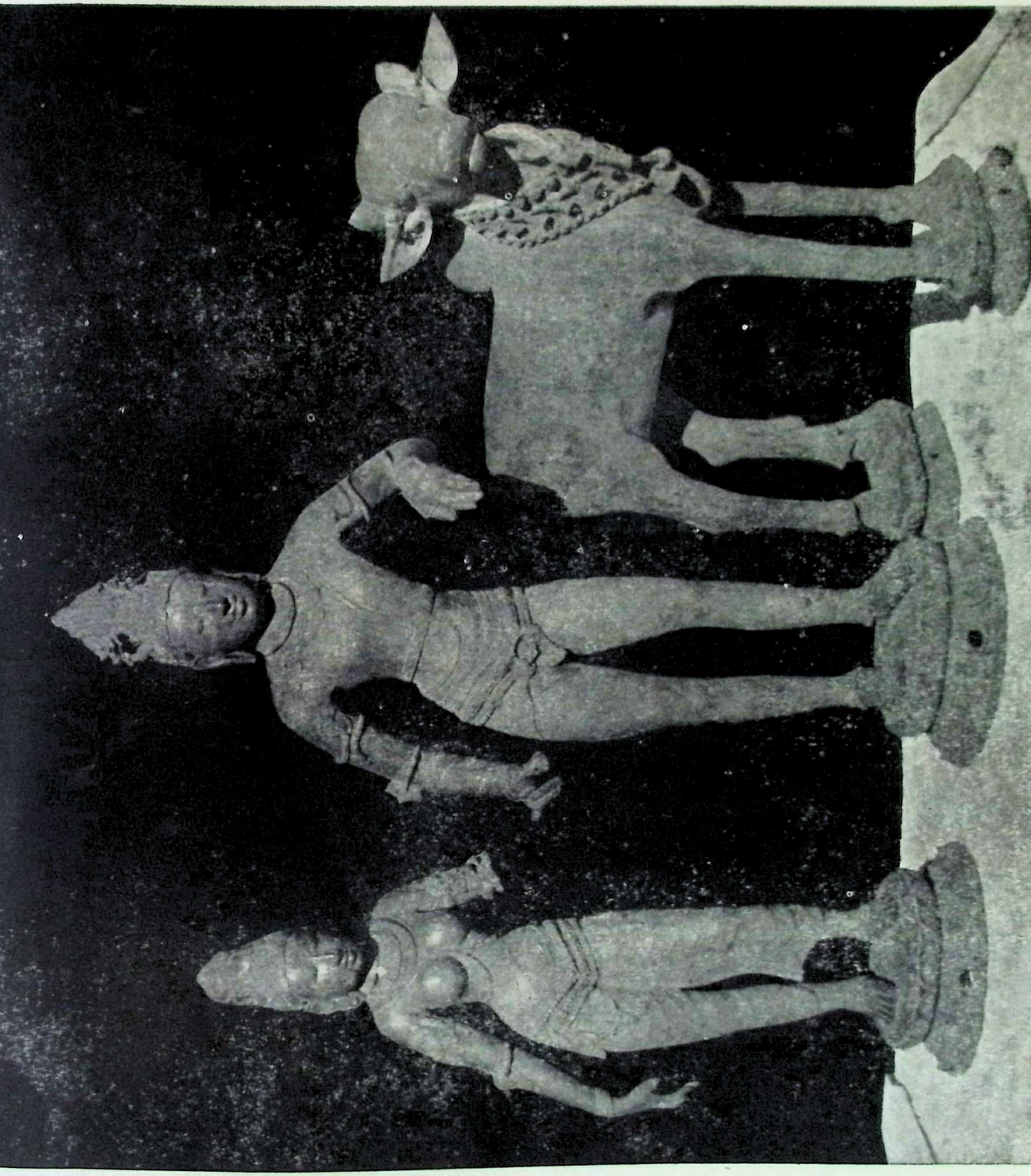

Fig. 67

PLATE XXXV.

Fig. 68. Rear view of Fig. 67.

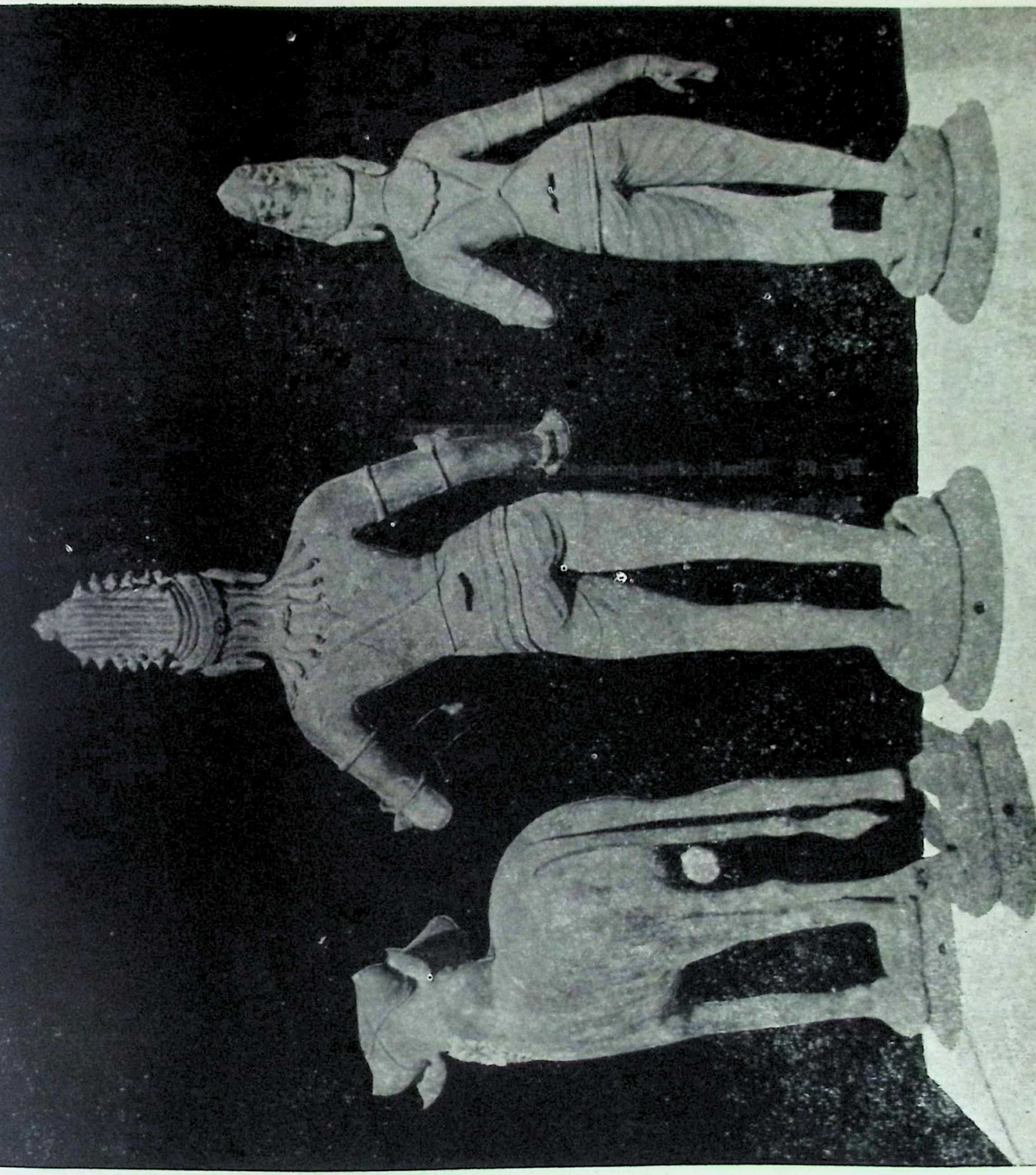

Fig. 68

PLATE XXXVI.

Fig 69. Pārvatī, of the group of Fig. 67.

Fig. 70. Side view of above.

Fig. 69

Fig. 70

PLATE XXXVII.

Fig. 71. Naṭeśa, in the same place as of Fig. 65 ; date same as of Fig. 65.

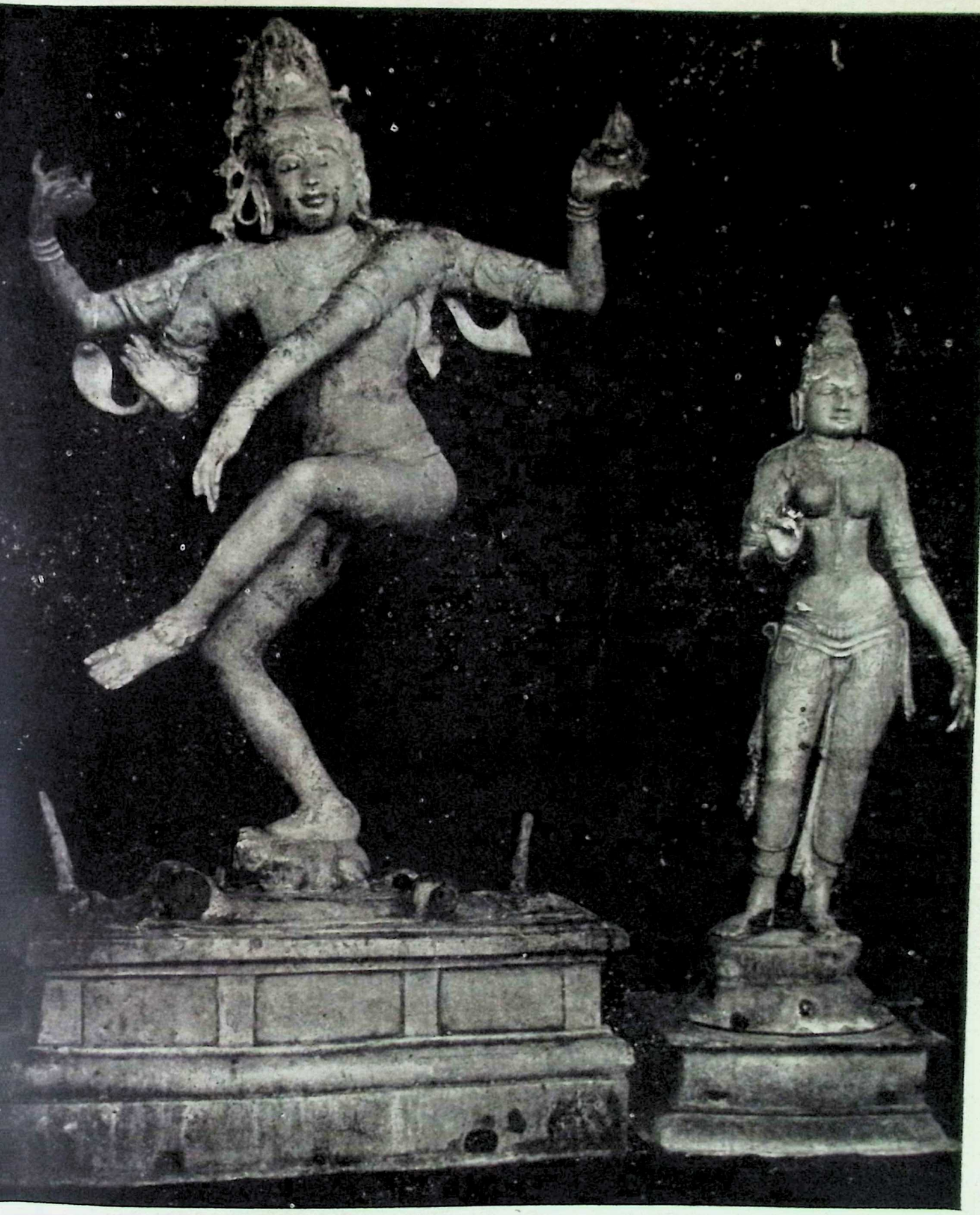

Fig. 71

PLATE XXXVIII.

Fig. 71 A. Rear view of Naṭeśa of Fig. 71.

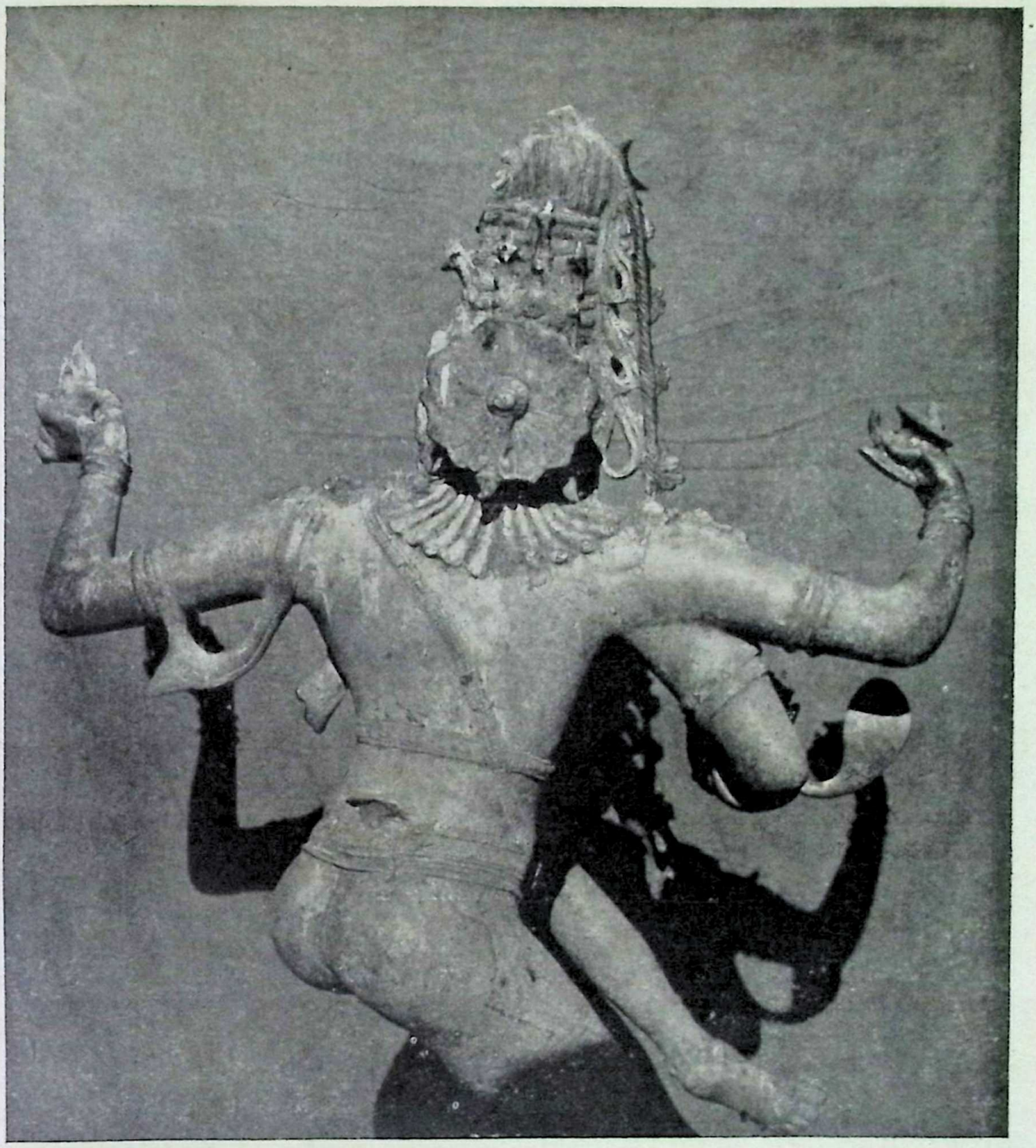

Fig. 71 A

PLATE XXXIX.

Fig. 72. Subrahmaṇya, in the same place as of Fig. 65.; date same as of Fig. 65.

Fig. 73. Rear view of above.

Fig. 72

Fig. 73

PLATE XL.

Fig. 74. Kirātamūrti, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery; about the last years of the second quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 75. Rear view of above.

Fig. 74

Fig. 75

PLATE XLI.

Fig. 76. Pārvatī, locality not known; now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (U.S.A.); about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

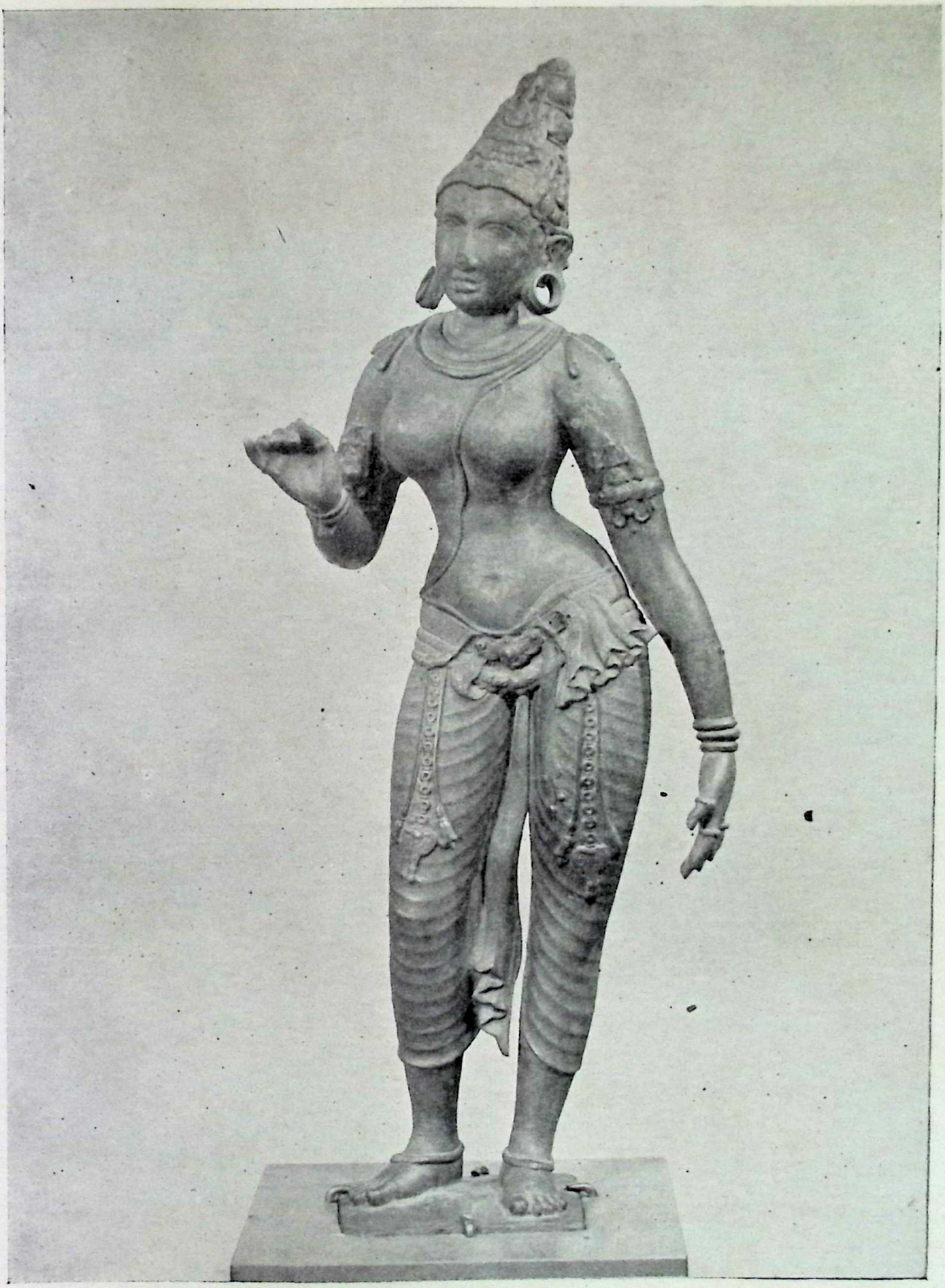

Fig. 76

PLATE XLII.

Fig. 77. Rear view of Fig. 76.

Fig. 77

PLATE XLIII.

Fig. 78. Vishṇu, standing, Koḍumuḍi, Coimbatore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 78

PLATE XLIV.

Fig. 79. Rear view of Fig. 78.

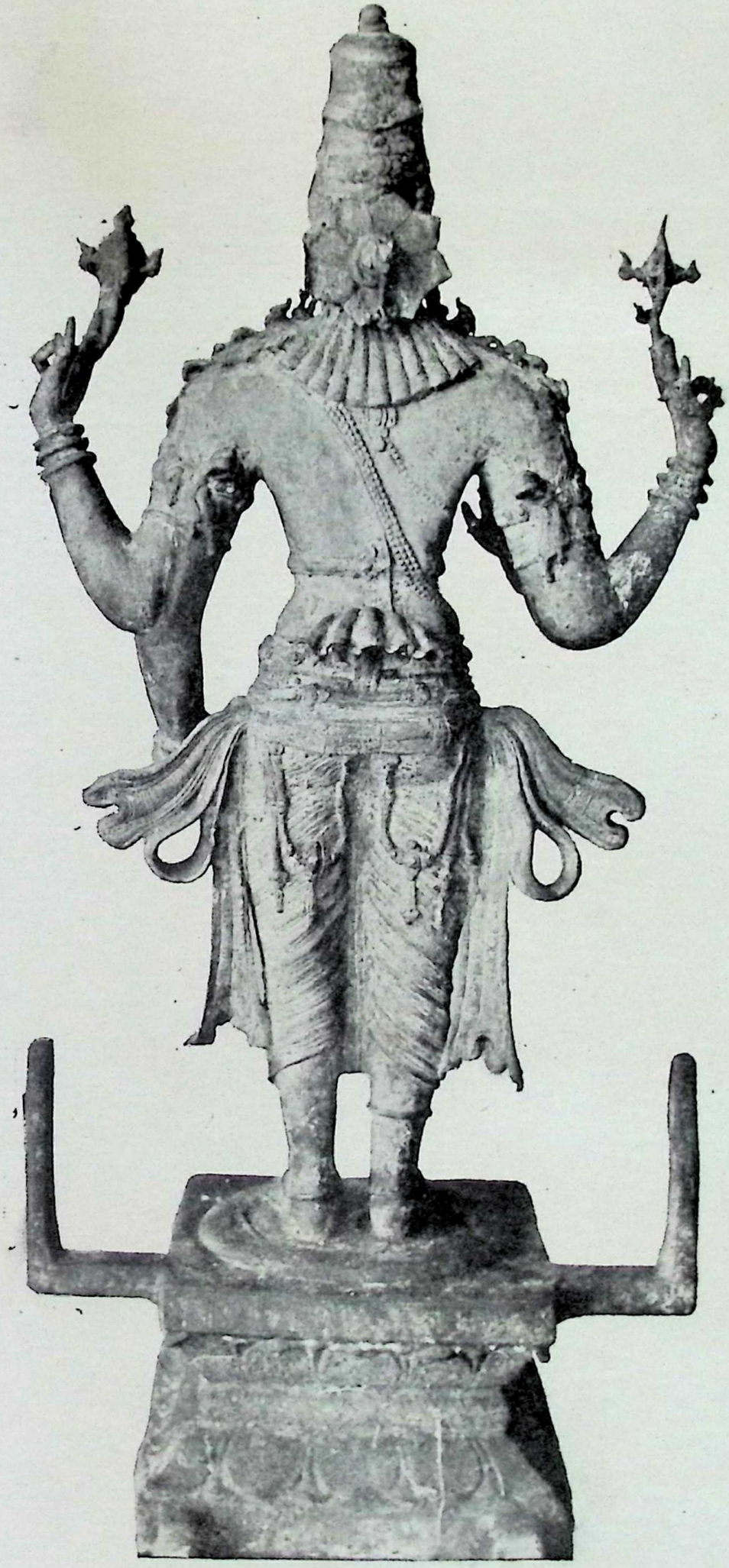

Fig. 79

PLATE XLV.

Fig. 80. Tripurāntaka group, in the same place as of Fig. 78; date same as of Fig. 78.

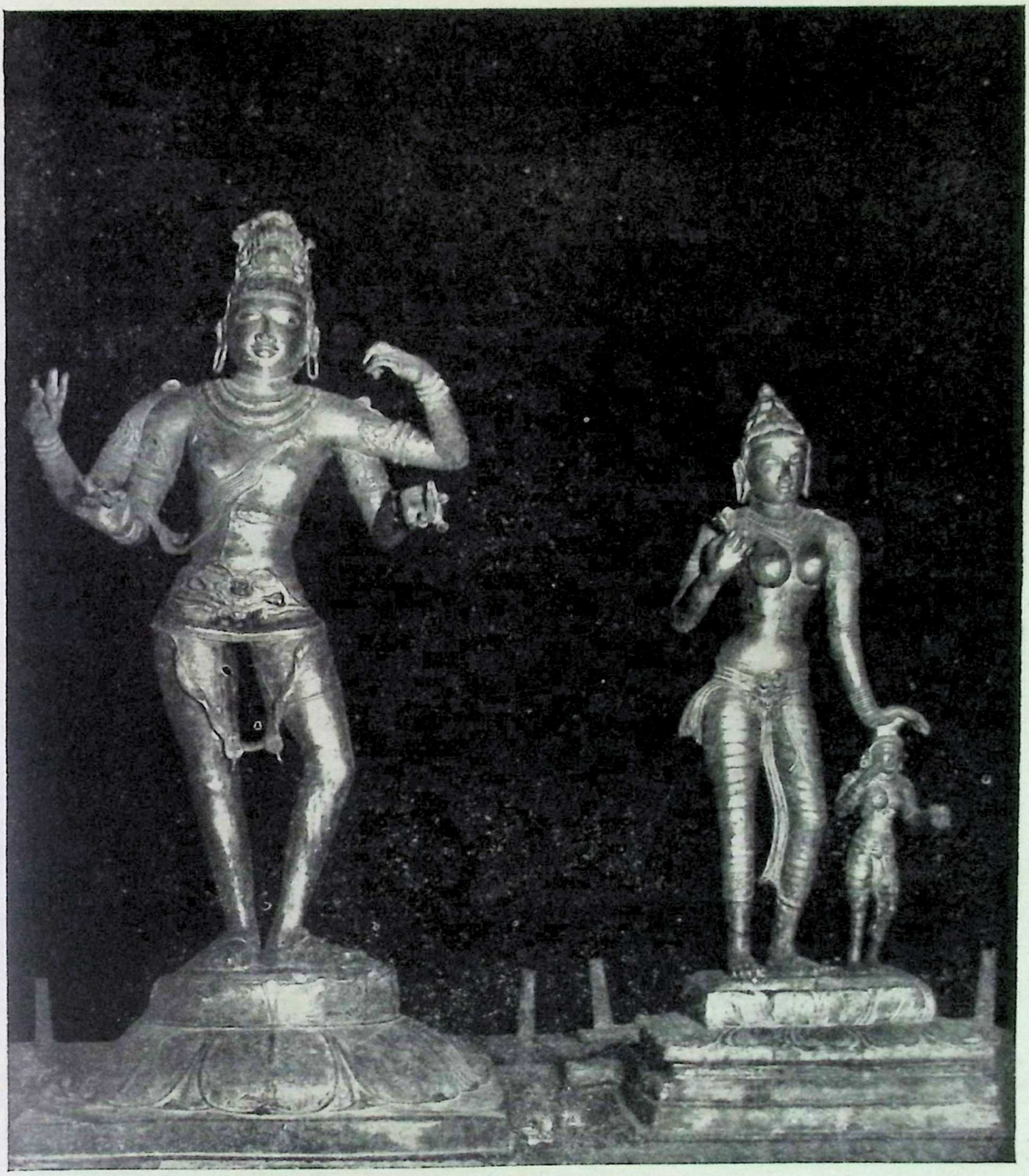

Fig. 80

PLATE XLVI.

Fig. 80 A. Detail of Śiva of Fig. 80.

Fig. 80 B. Pārvatī of Fig. 80.

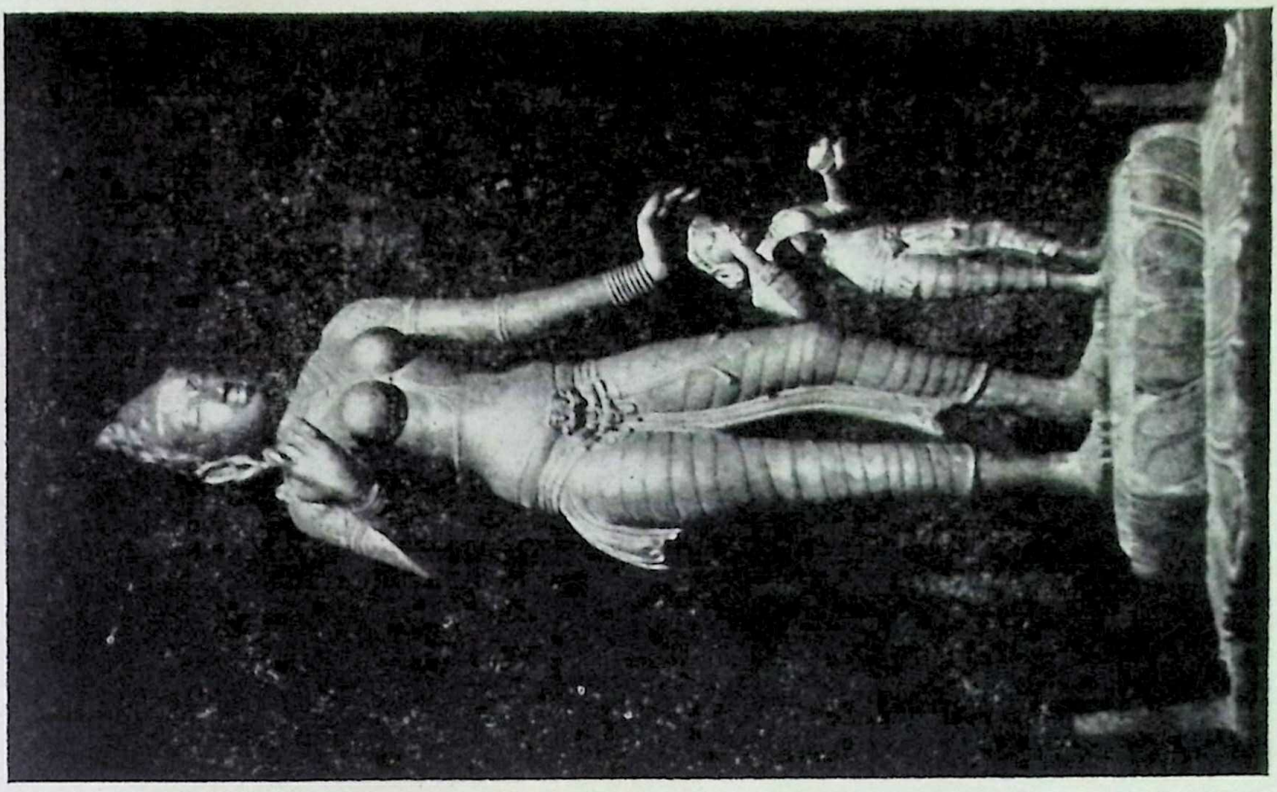

Fig. 80 B

Fig. 80 A

PLATE XLVII.

Fig 81. Rear view of Fig. 80.

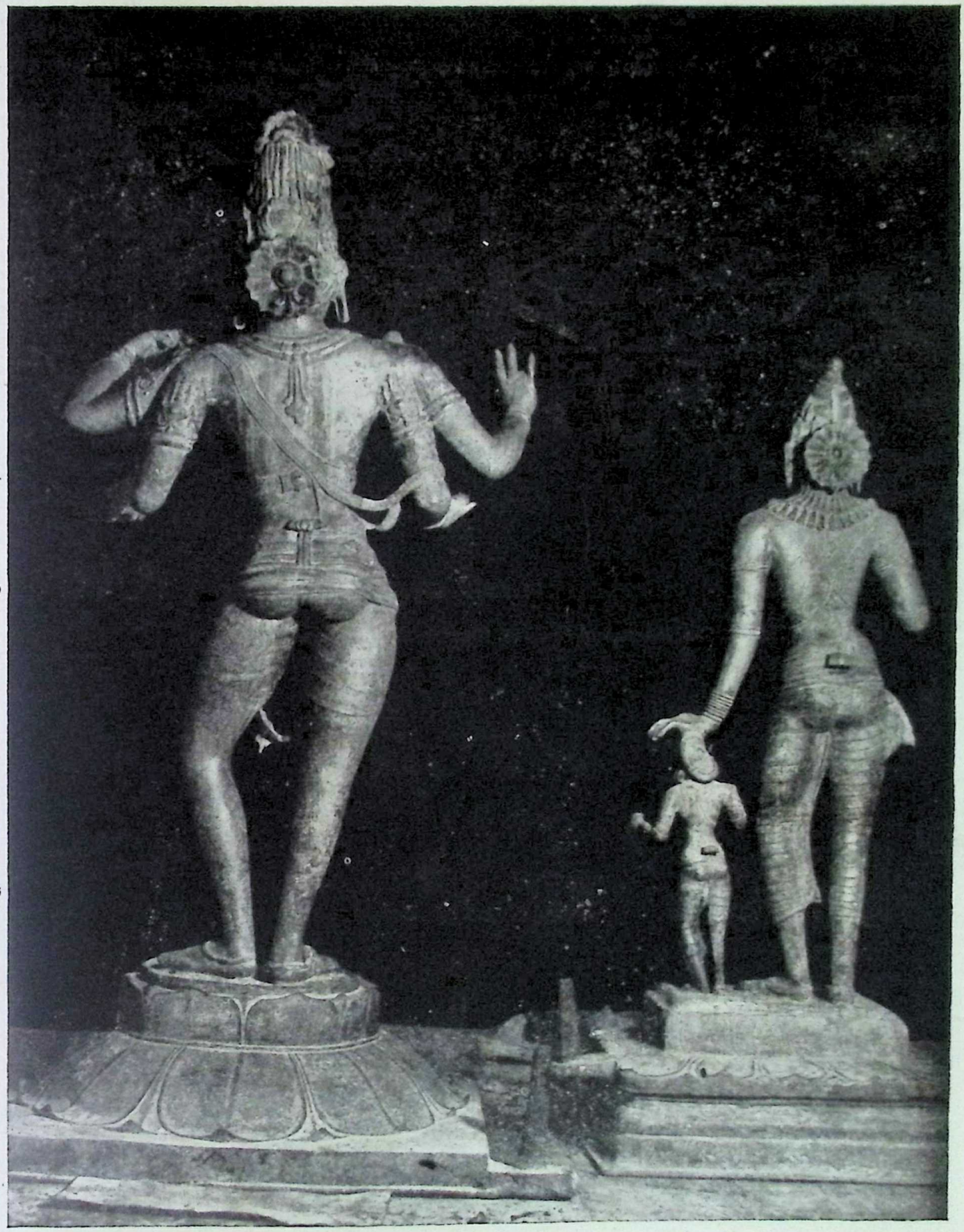

Fig. 81

PLATE XLVIII.

Fig. 82 Naṭeśa, in the same place as of Fig. 80; date same as of Fig. 80.

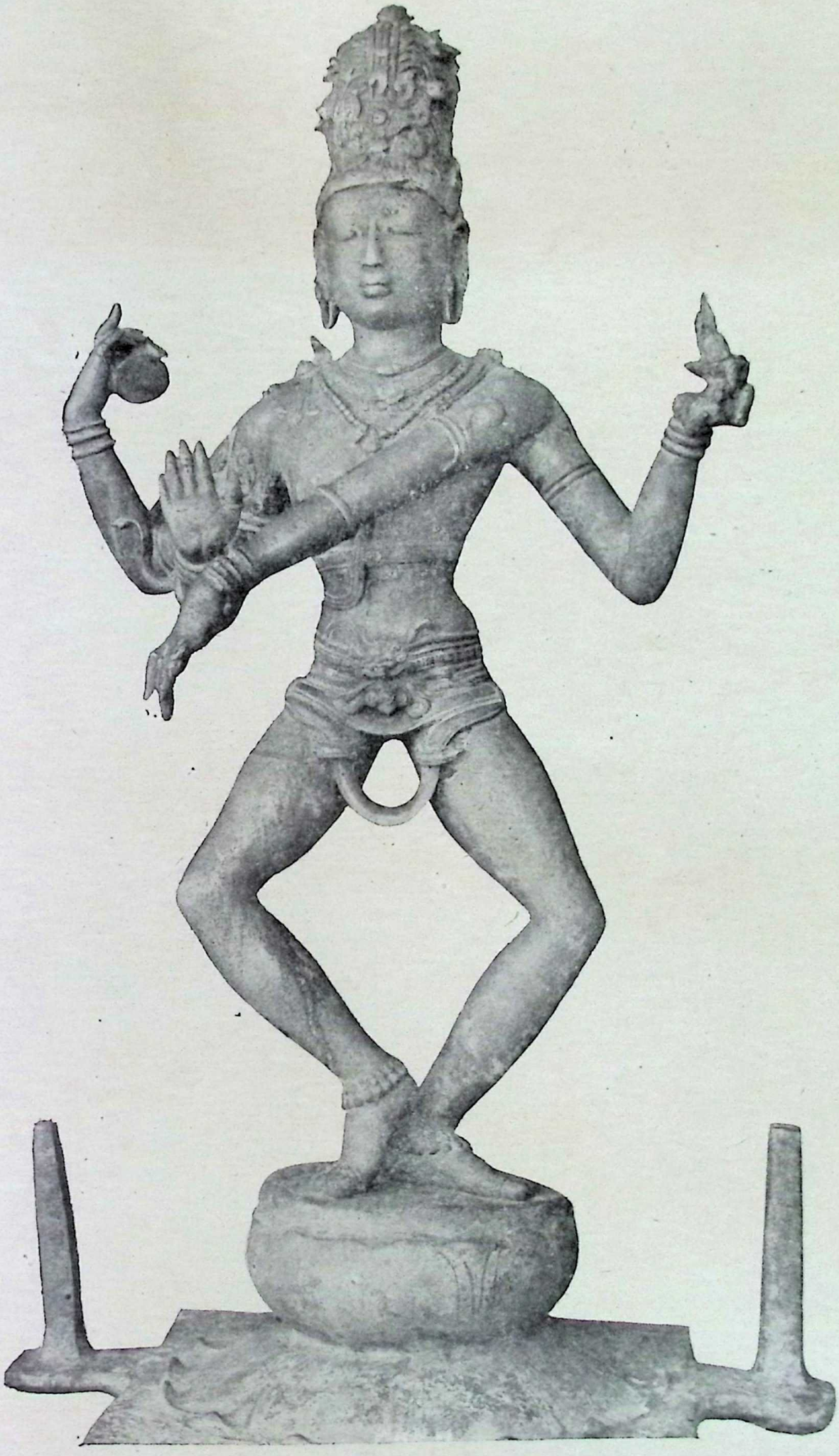

Fig. 82.

PLATE XLIX.

Fig. 83. Rear view of Fig. 82.

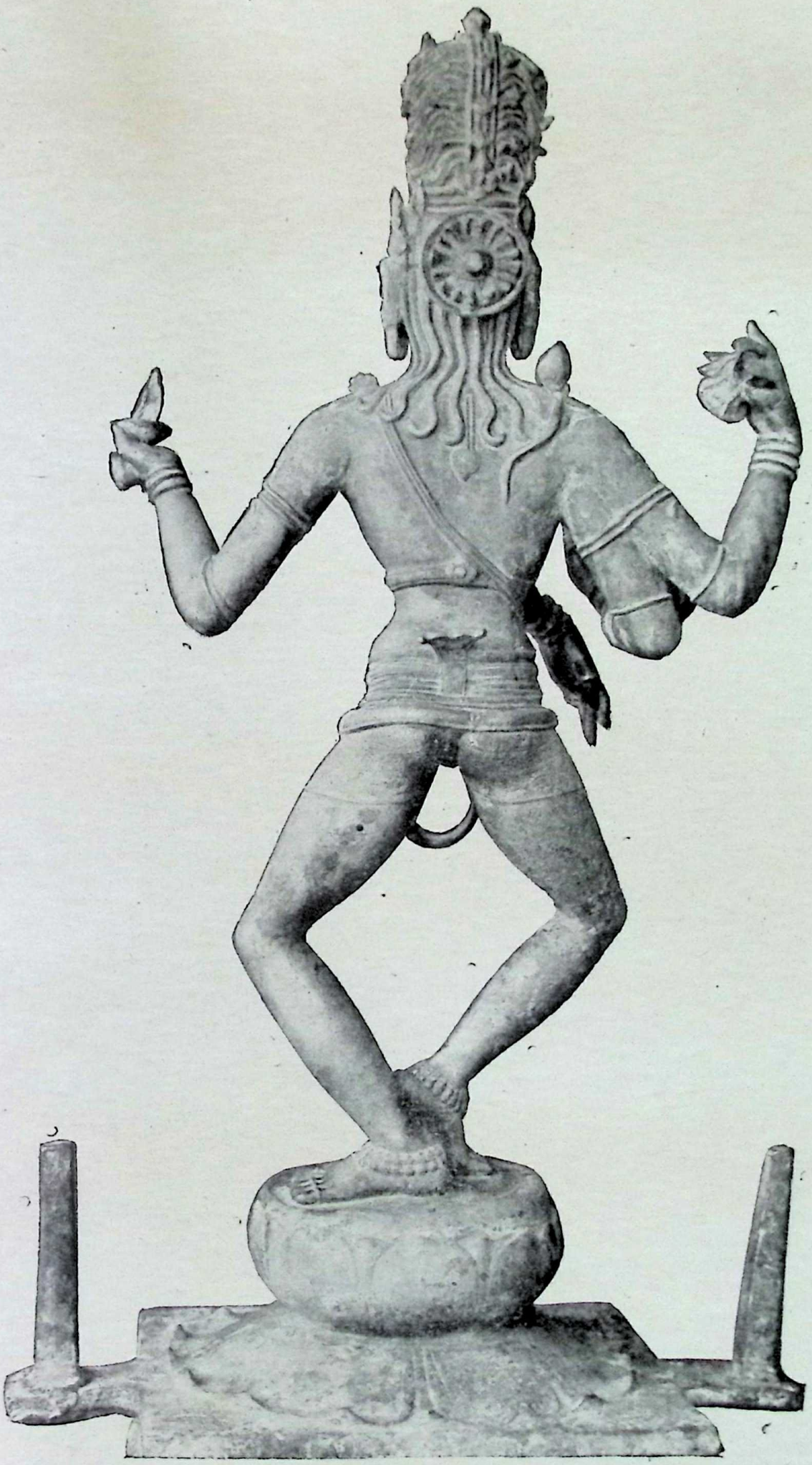

Fig. 83

PLATE L.

Fig. 84. Chaṇḍikeśvara, seated, Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 82.

Fig. 81

PLATE LI.

Fig. 85. Rear view of Fig. 84.

Fig. 85

PLATE LII.

Fig. 86. Somāskanda, Sorakkuḍi, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 84.

Fig. 87. Rear view of above.

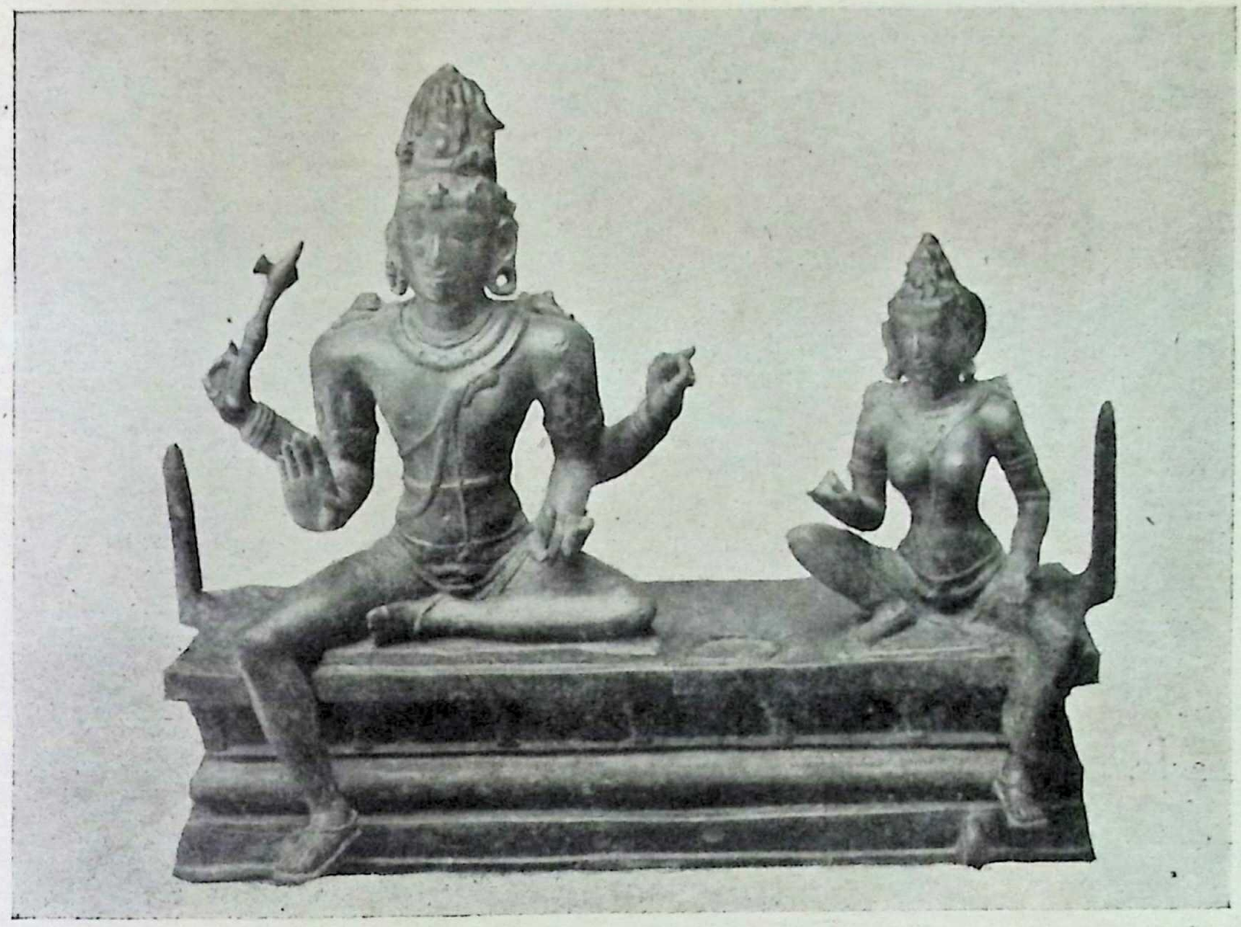

Fig. 86

Fig. 87

PLATE LIII.

Fig. 88. Naṭeśa, Okkūr, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 86.

Fig. 89. Rear view of above.

Fig. 88

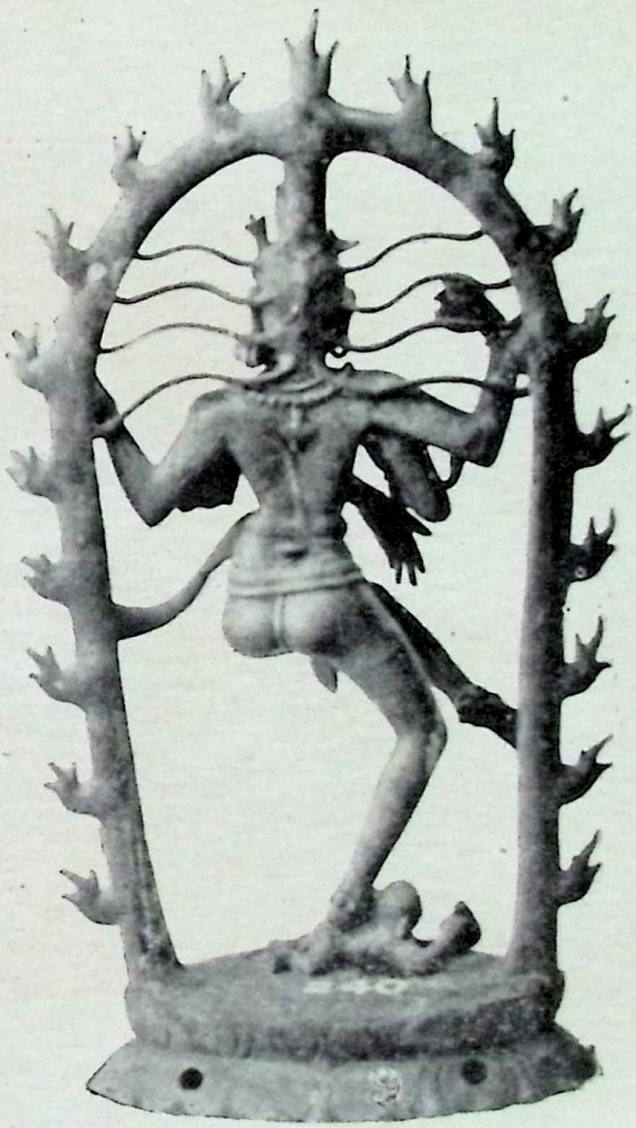

Fig. 89

PLATE LIV.

Fig. 90. Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa, Paruttiyūr, Tanjore District; in the Rāma temple there; date same as of Fig. 88.

Fig. 90

PLATE LV.

Fig. 91. Śrīnivāsa, in the same place as of Fig. 90; date same as of Fig. 90.

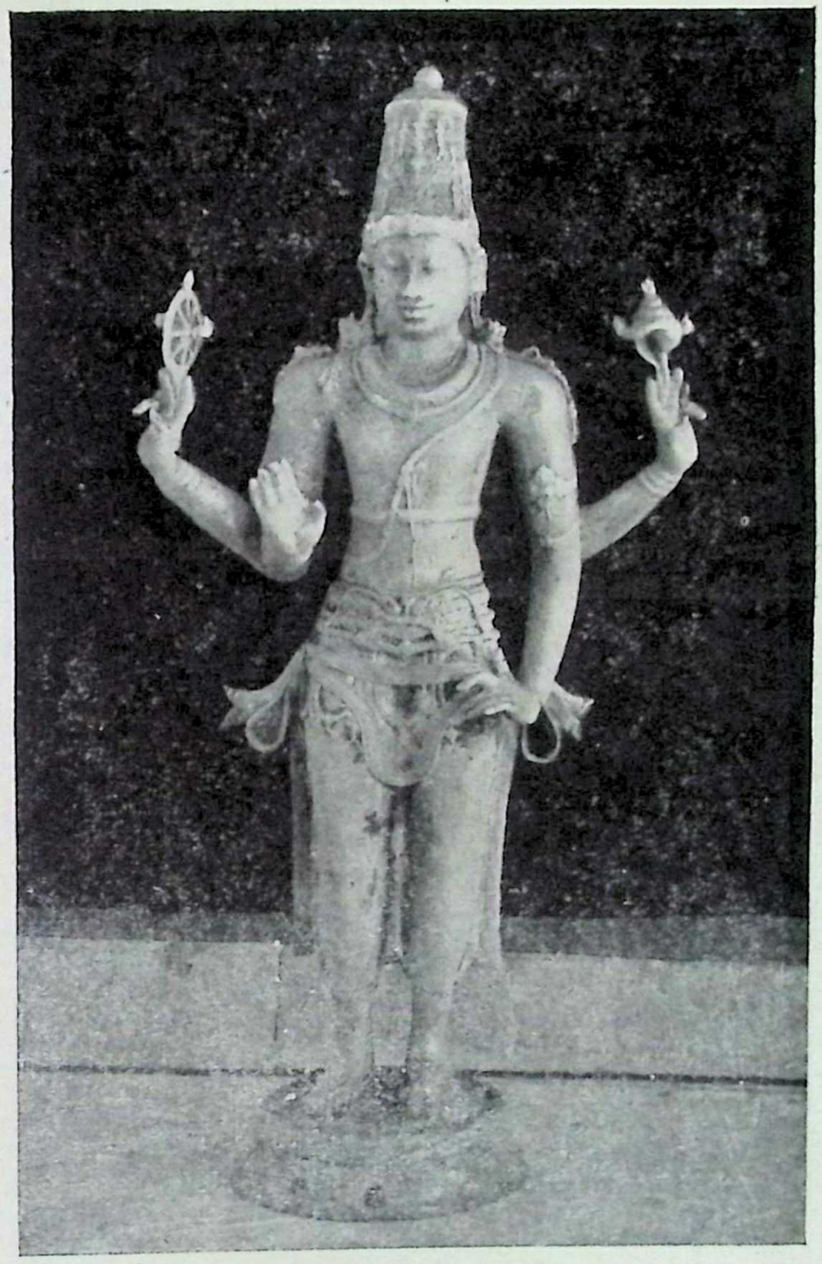

Fig. 91

PLATE LVI.

Fig. 92. Somāskanda, Śivapuram, Tanjore District; in the Śivā temple there; about the middle of the 10th century A.D.

PLATE LVII.

Fig. 93. Naṭeśa, in the same place as of Fig. 92; date same as of Fig. 92.

Fig. 93

PLATE LVIII.

Fig. 94. Gaṇeśa, in the same place as of Fig. 93 ; date same as of Fig. 93.

Fig. 95. Naṭeśa, Āṇaikkuḍi, Tanjore District; slightly later than the above.

Fig. 95

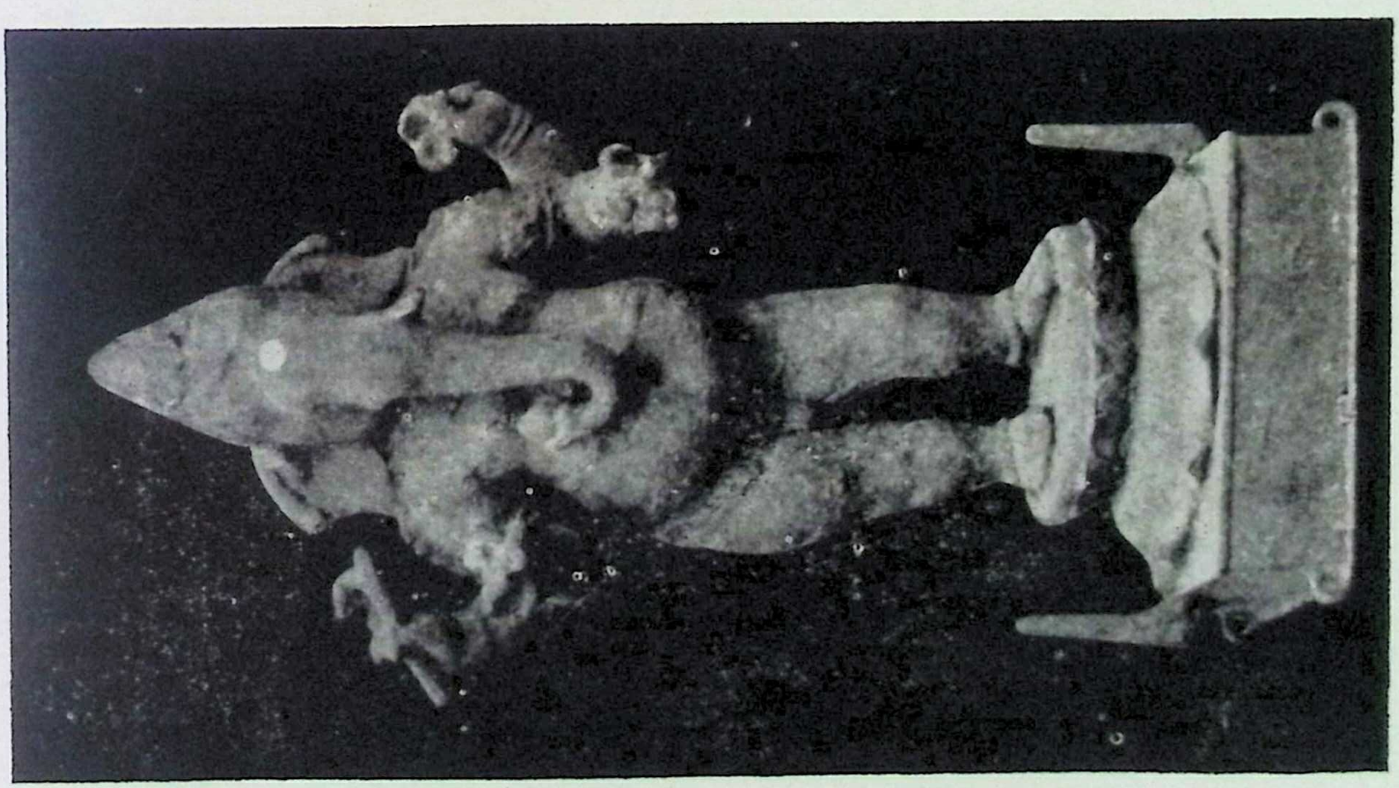

Fig. 94

PLATE LIX.

Fig. 96. Rāma group, Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr, Tanjore District; about the beginning of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

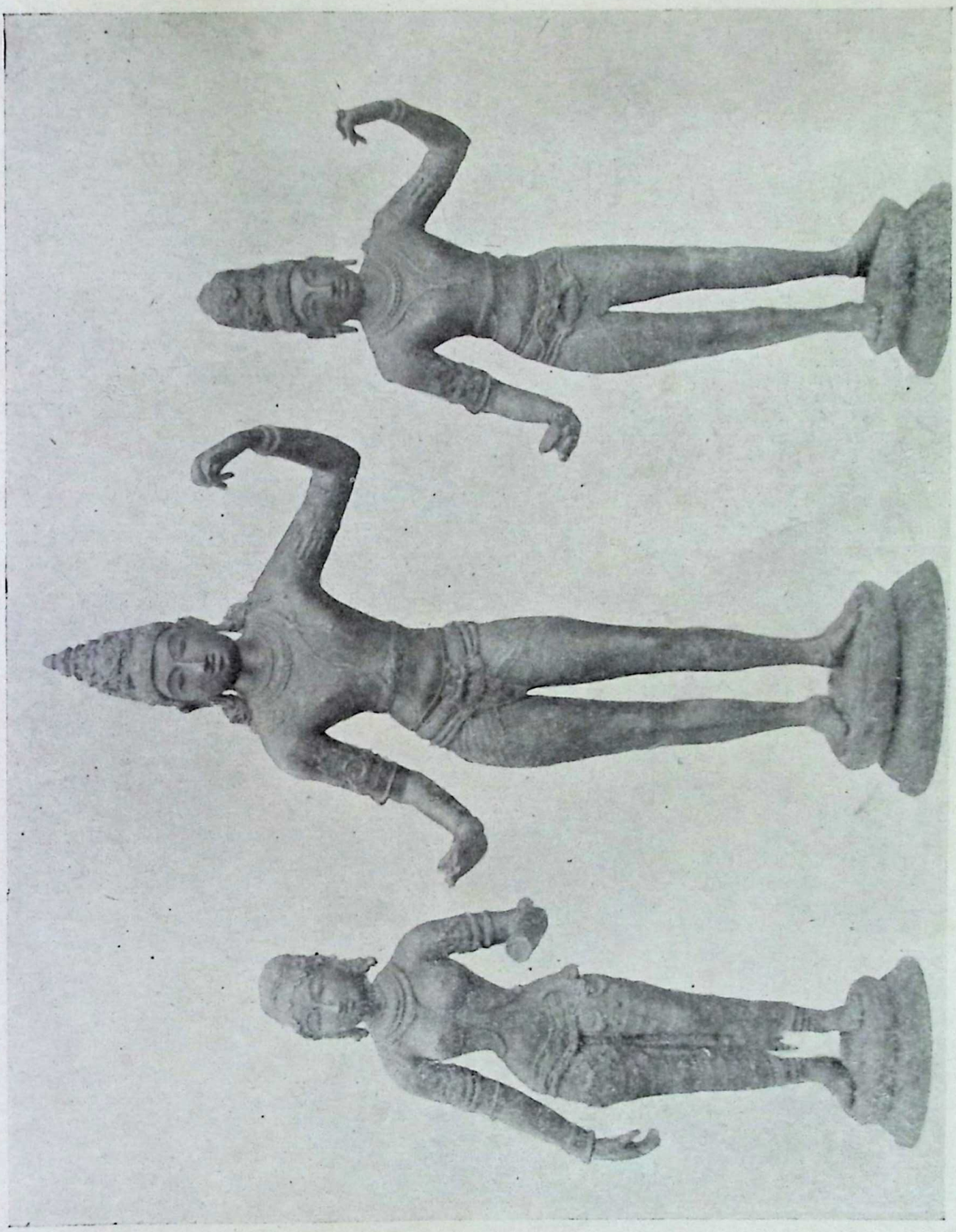

Fig. 96

PLATE LX.

Fig. 96 A. Detail of Rāma of Fig. 96.

Fig. 96 A

PLATE LXI.

Fig. 96 b. Detail of Sītā of Fig. 96.

Fig. 96 c. Detail of Lakshmaṇa of Fig. 96.

Fig. 96 C

Fig. 96 B

PLATE LXII.

Fig. 97. Rear view of Fig. 96.

Fig. 98. Hanumān, probably of the Rāma group of Fig. 96; date same as of Fig. 96.

Fig. 98 A. Rear view of above.

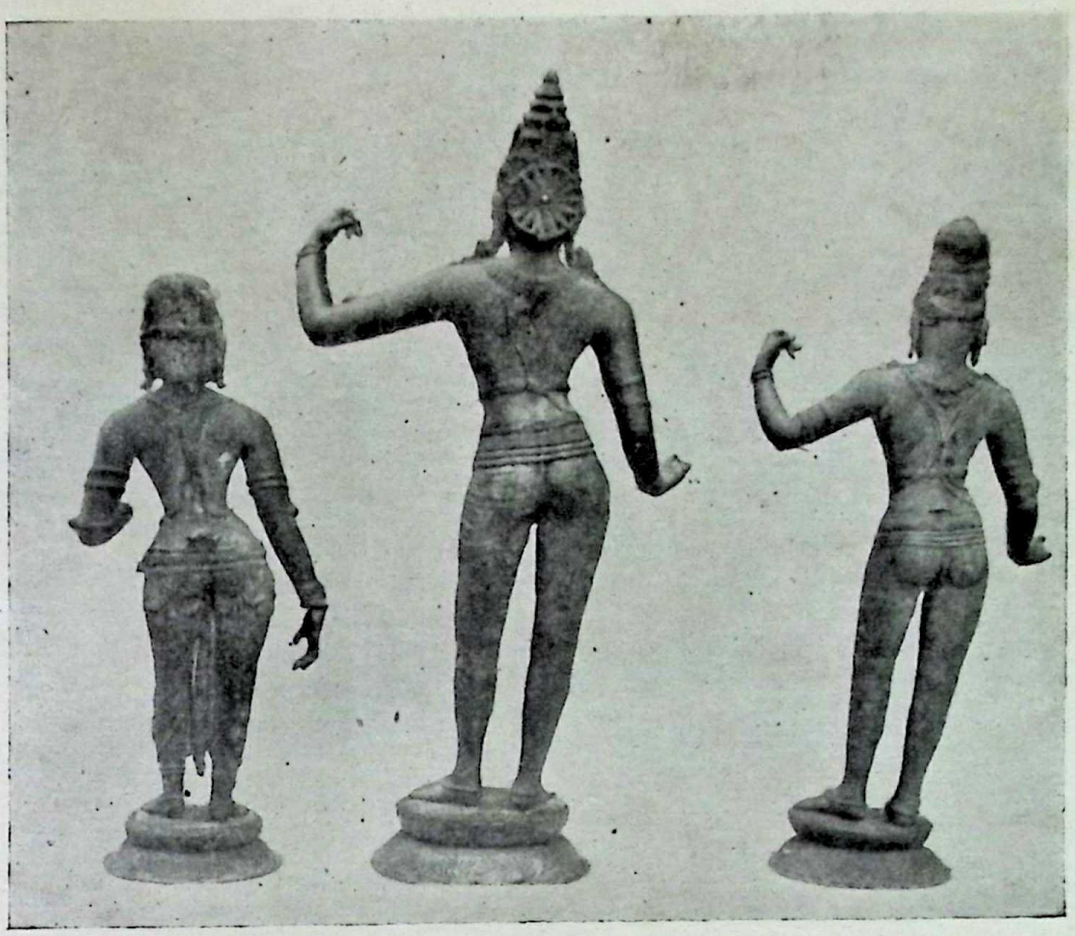

Fig. 97

Fig. 98

Fig. 98 A

PLATE LXIII.

Fig. 99. Śrīnivāsa group, Sirupaṇaiyūr, Tanjore District; early part of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

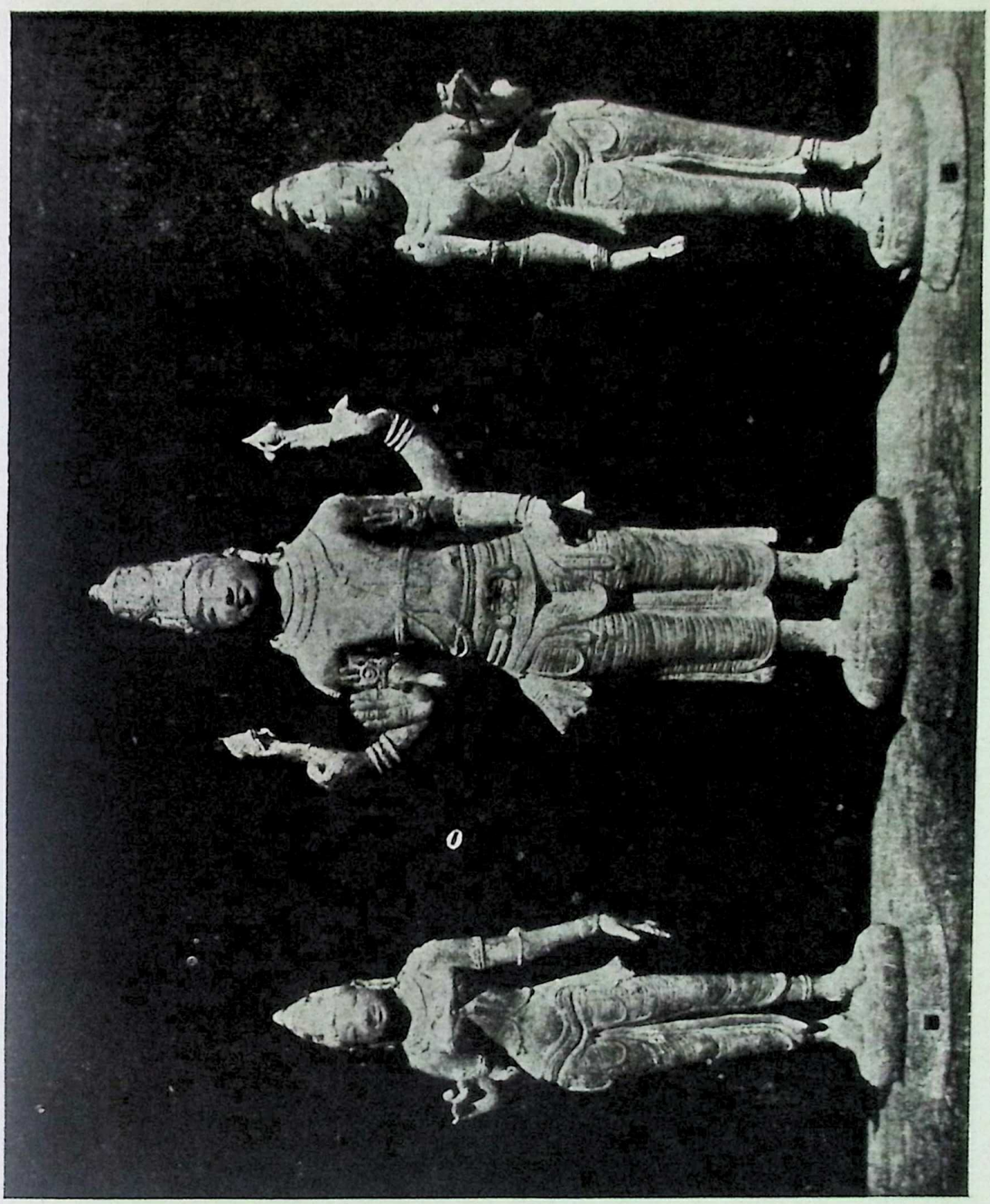

Fig. 66

PLATE LXIV.

Fig. 100. Rear view of Fig. 99.

Fig. 101. Buddha, seated, Kadri, near Mangalore, South Kanara District; in the Mañjunātha temple there; about 968 A.D.

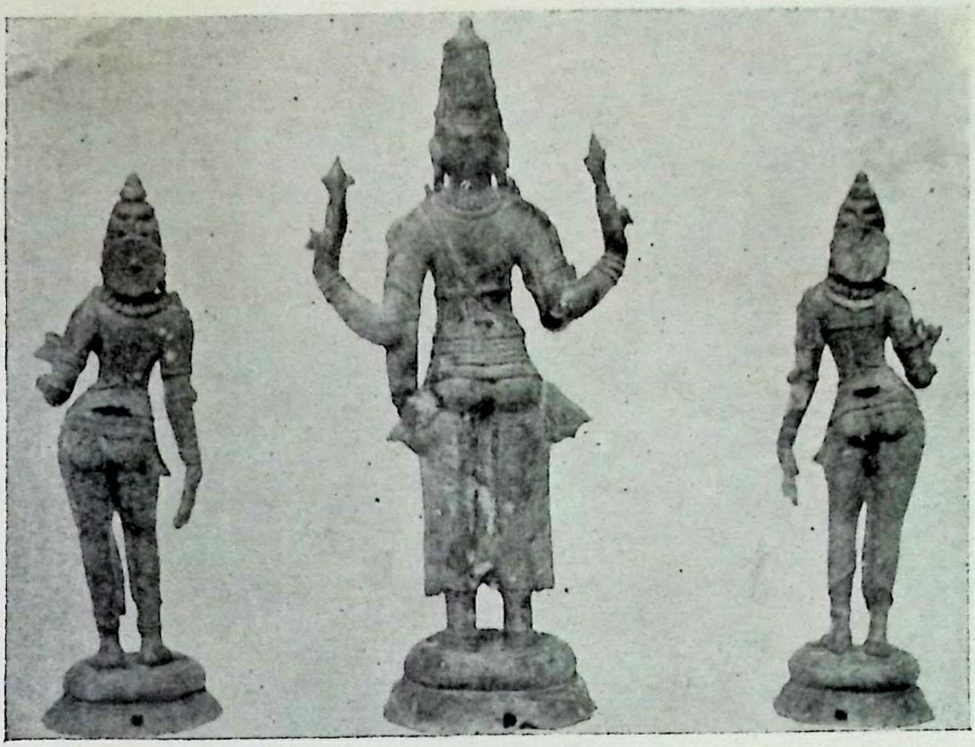

Fig. 100

Fig. 101

PLATE LXV.

Fig. 102. Hālāhala Lokeśvara; in the same place as of Fig. 102; contains inscription with the date in Kaliera corresponding to 968 A.D. for its installation.

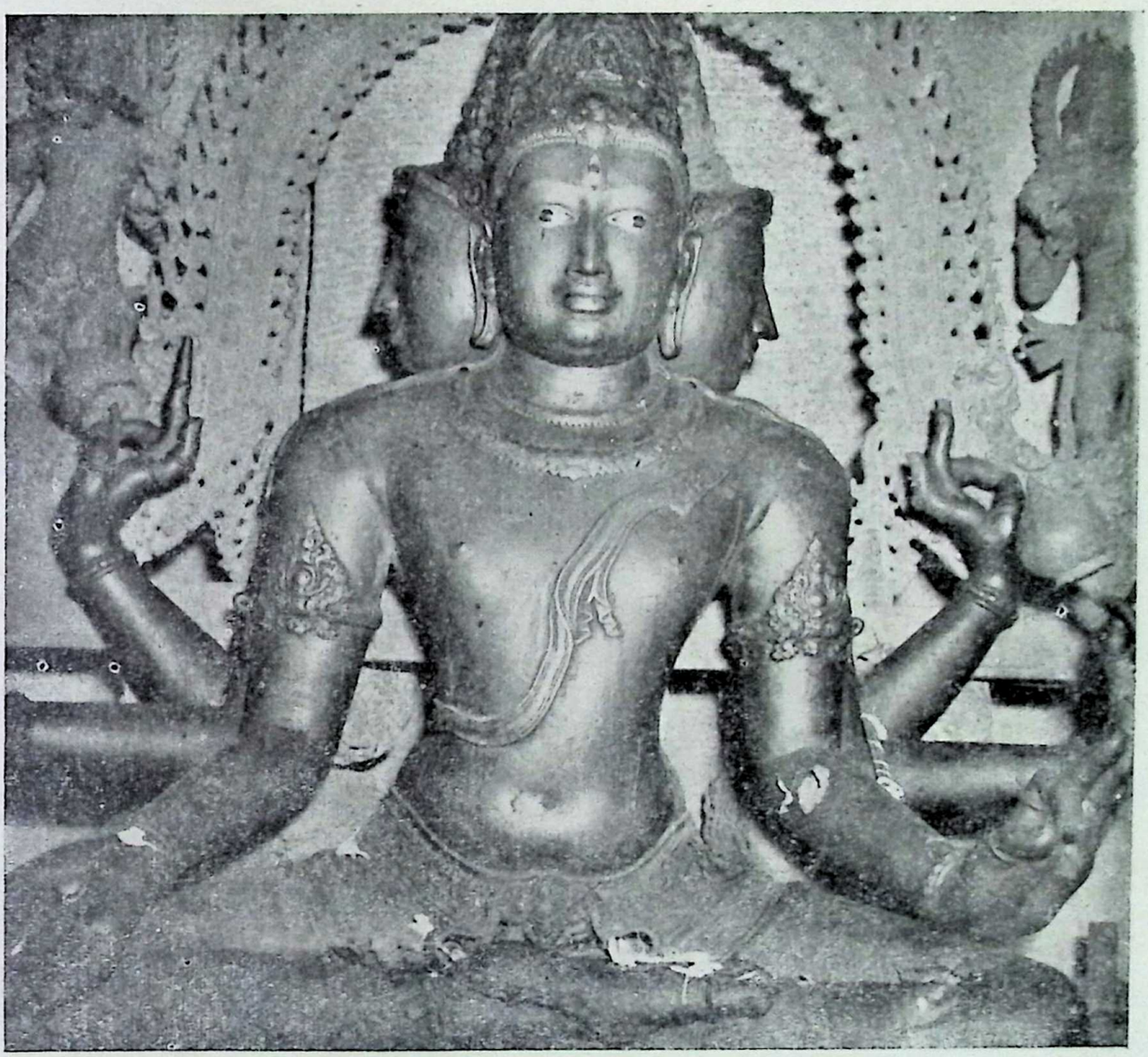

Fig. 102

PLATE LXVI.

Fig. 103. Lokanātha Avalokiteśvara: in the same place as of Fig. 102; date about the same as of Fig. 102.

Fig. 103

PLATE LXVII.

Fig. 104. Bhikshāṭanamūrti, Tirunāmanallūr, South Arcot District; slightly later than the above bronzes from Kadri.

Fig. 105. Rear view of above.

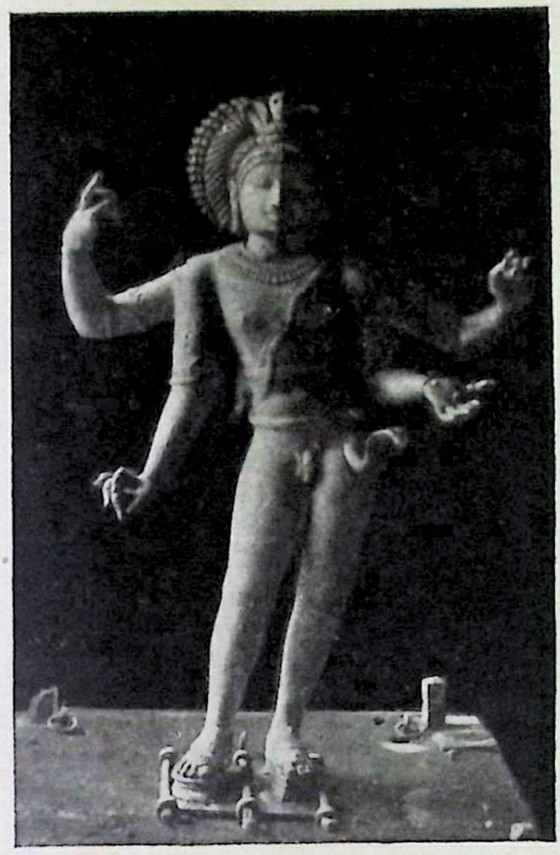

Fig. 104

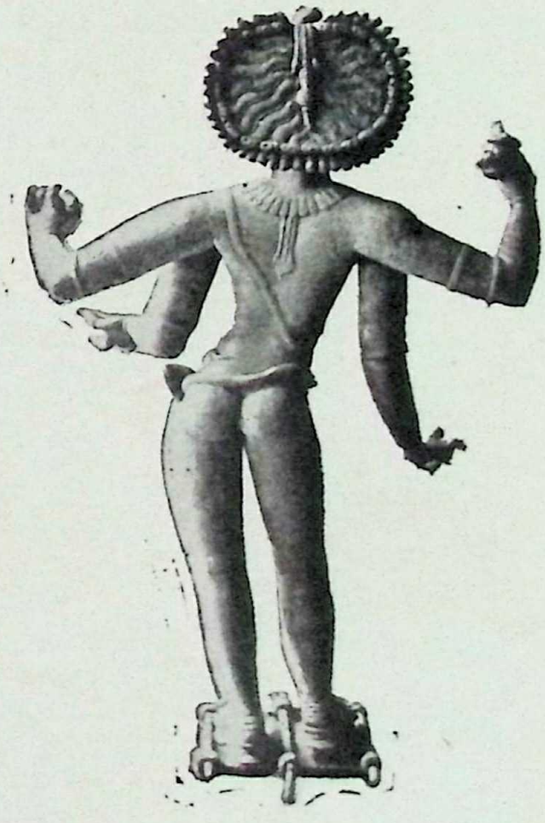

Fig. 105

PLATE LXVIII.

Fig. 106. Subrahmaṇya as Devasenāpati, Tiruviḍaikkaḷi, Tanjore District; in the temple there; about the end of the third quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 106

PLATE LXIX.

Fig. 107. Naṭeśa, Tiruvaraṅguḷam, near Pudukkottai, Tiruchirappalli District; now in the National Museum, New Delhi; date same as of Fig. 106.

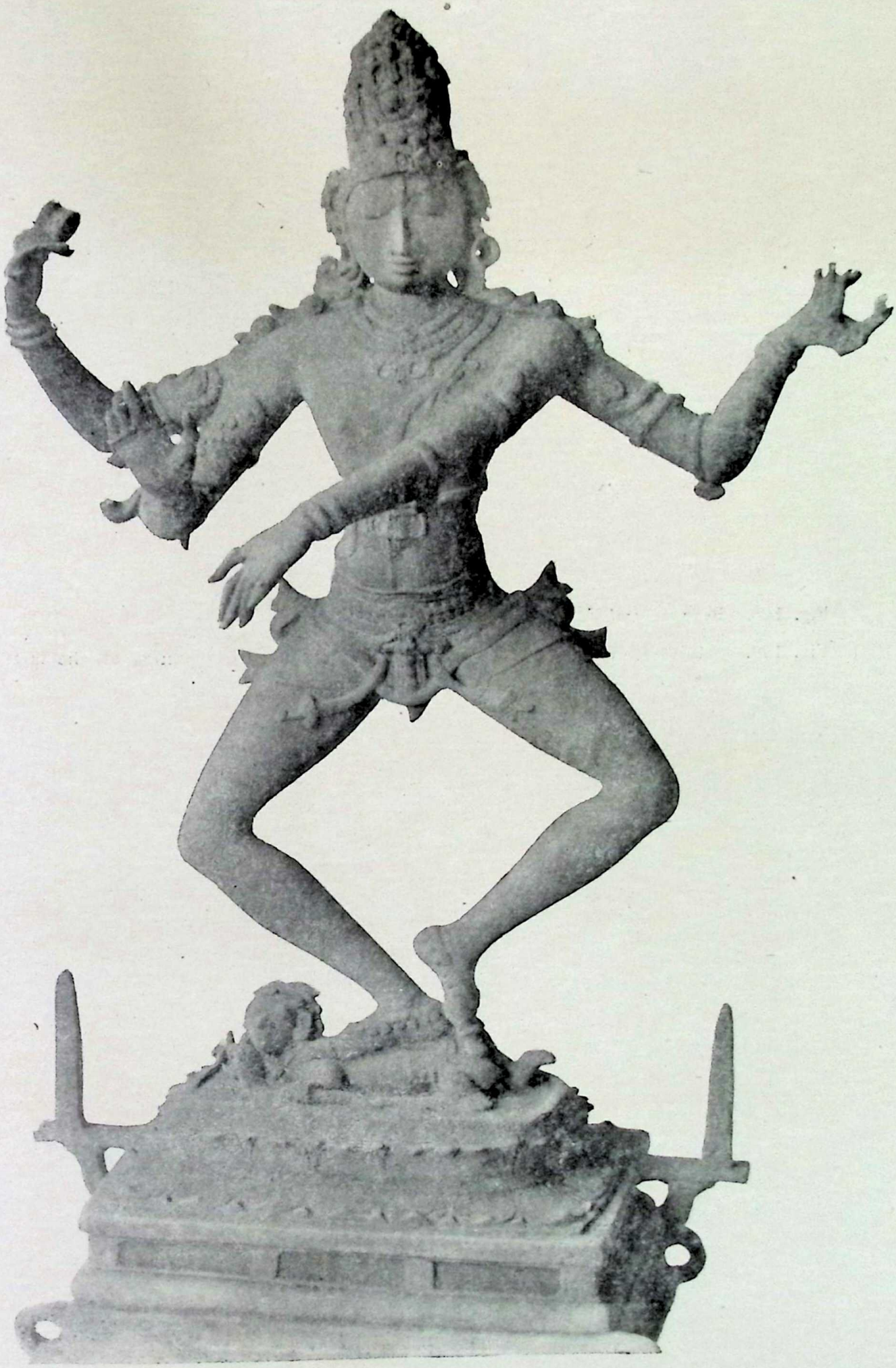

Fig. 107

PLATE LXX.

Fig. 108. Rear view of Fig. 107.

Fig. 109. Śrīnivāsa, Vaḍakāḍu, Tanjore District: about the beginning of the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.

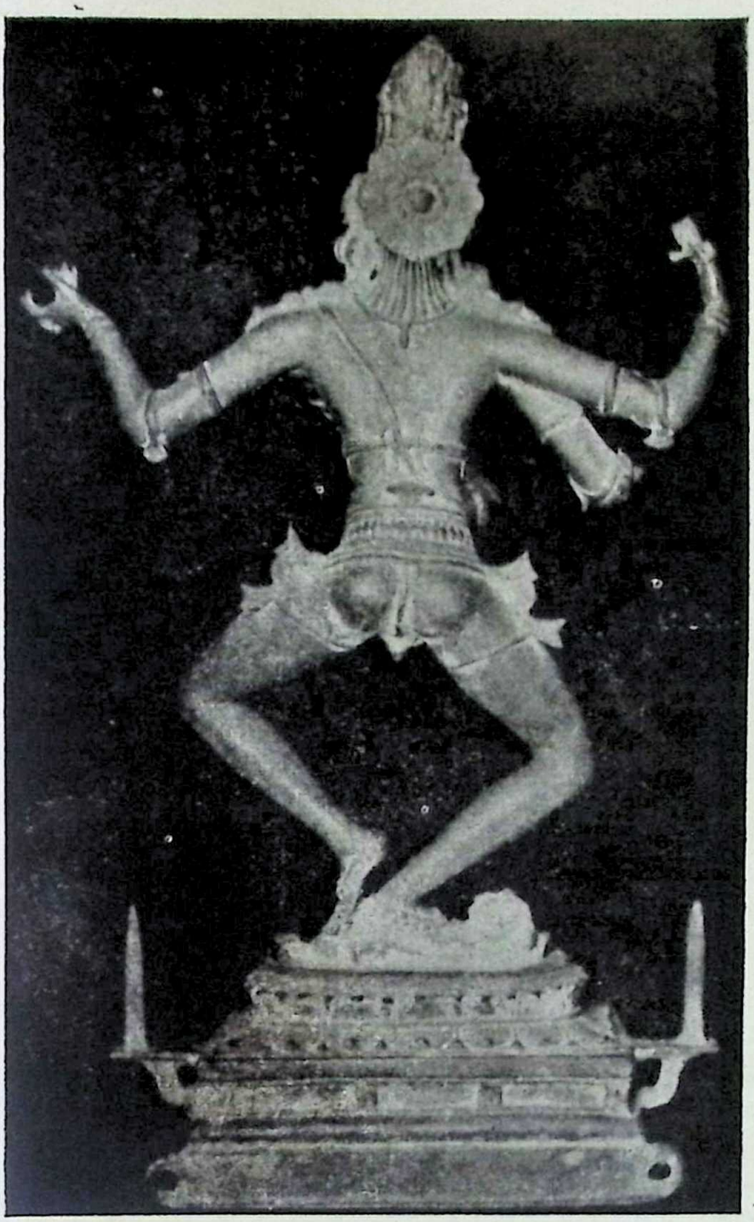

Fig. 108

Fig. 109

PLATE LXXI.

Fig. 110. Gaṇeśa, Koḍiakāḍu, Tanjore District ; date same as above,

Fig. 111. Gaṇeśa, Seṭṭipulam, Tanjore District ; about the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 110

Fig. 111

PLATE LXXII.

Fig. 112. Chaṇḍikeśvara, Okkūr, Tanjore District ; date same as of Fig. 111.

Fig. 113. Rear view of above.

Fig. 114. Goḷaka-maharishi (?), Koḍikkaṟai Tanjore District ; in the temple there ; date same as of Fig. 112.

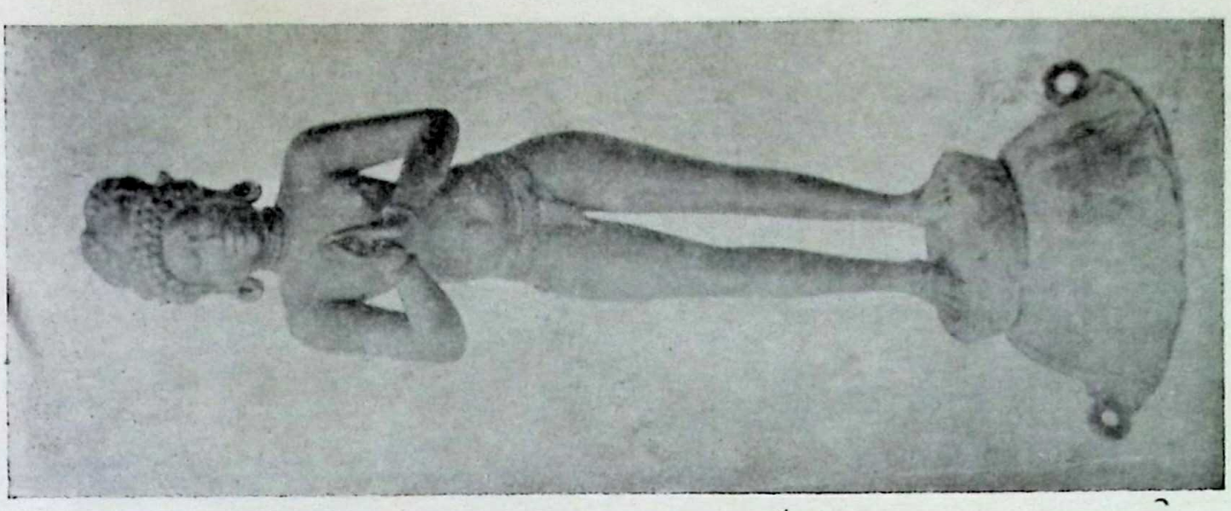

Fig. 114

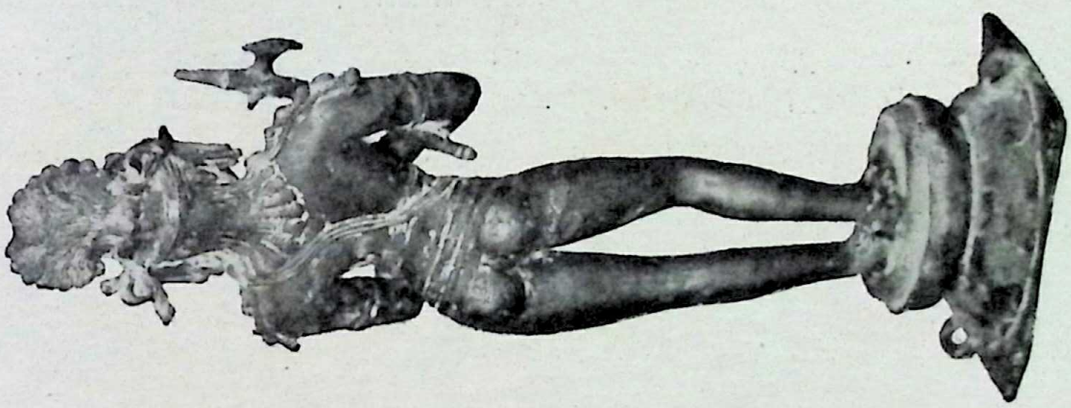

Fig. 113

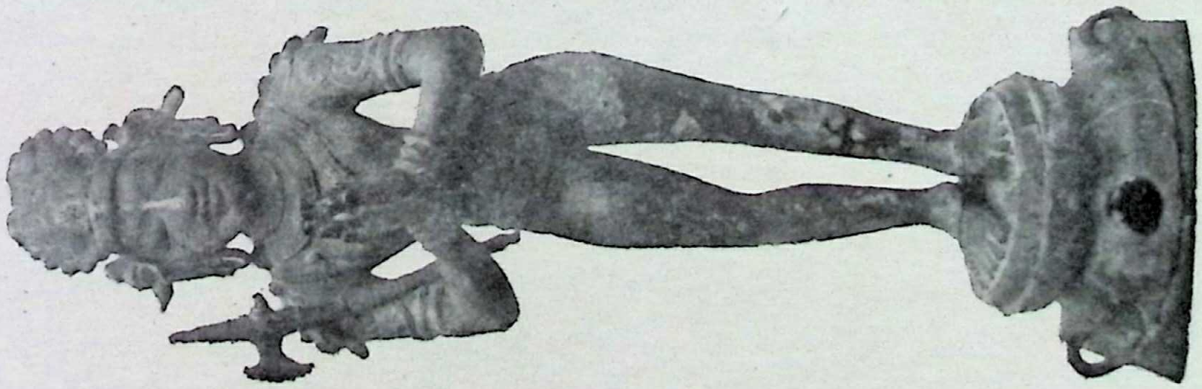

Fig. 112

PLATE LXXIII.

Fig. 115. Mārkaṇḍeya, belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Māyūram, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 114.

Fig. 116. Māheśvarī, Velāṅkaṇṇi, Tanjore District; about the end of the 10th century A.D.

Fig. 115

Fig. 116

PLATE LXXIV.

Fig. 117. Naṭeśa, from the same place as of Fig. 116 ; date same as of Fig. 116.

Fig. 118. Rear view of above.

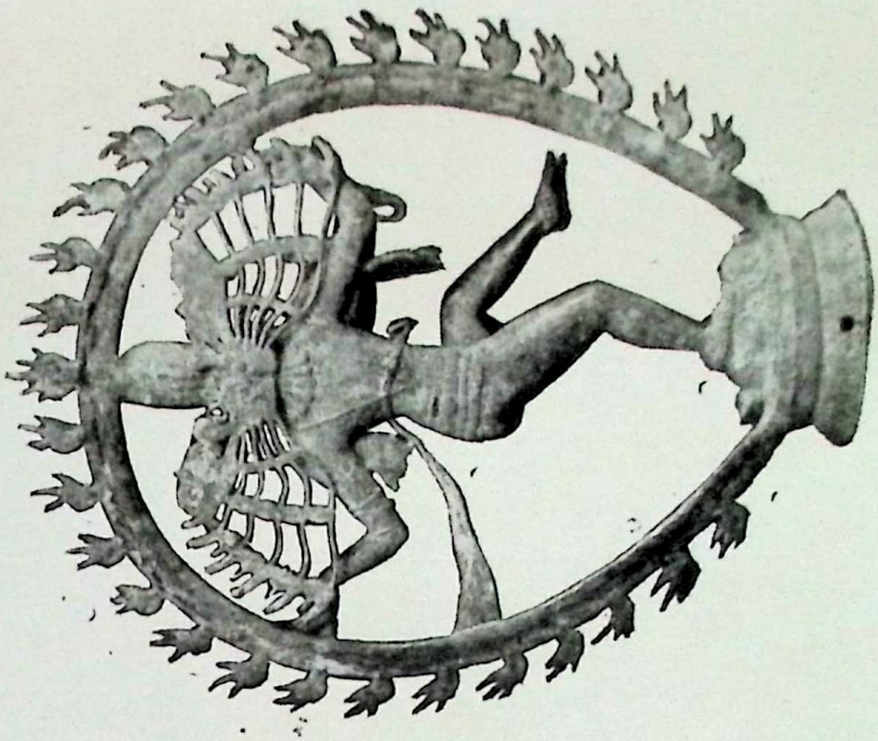

Fig. 118

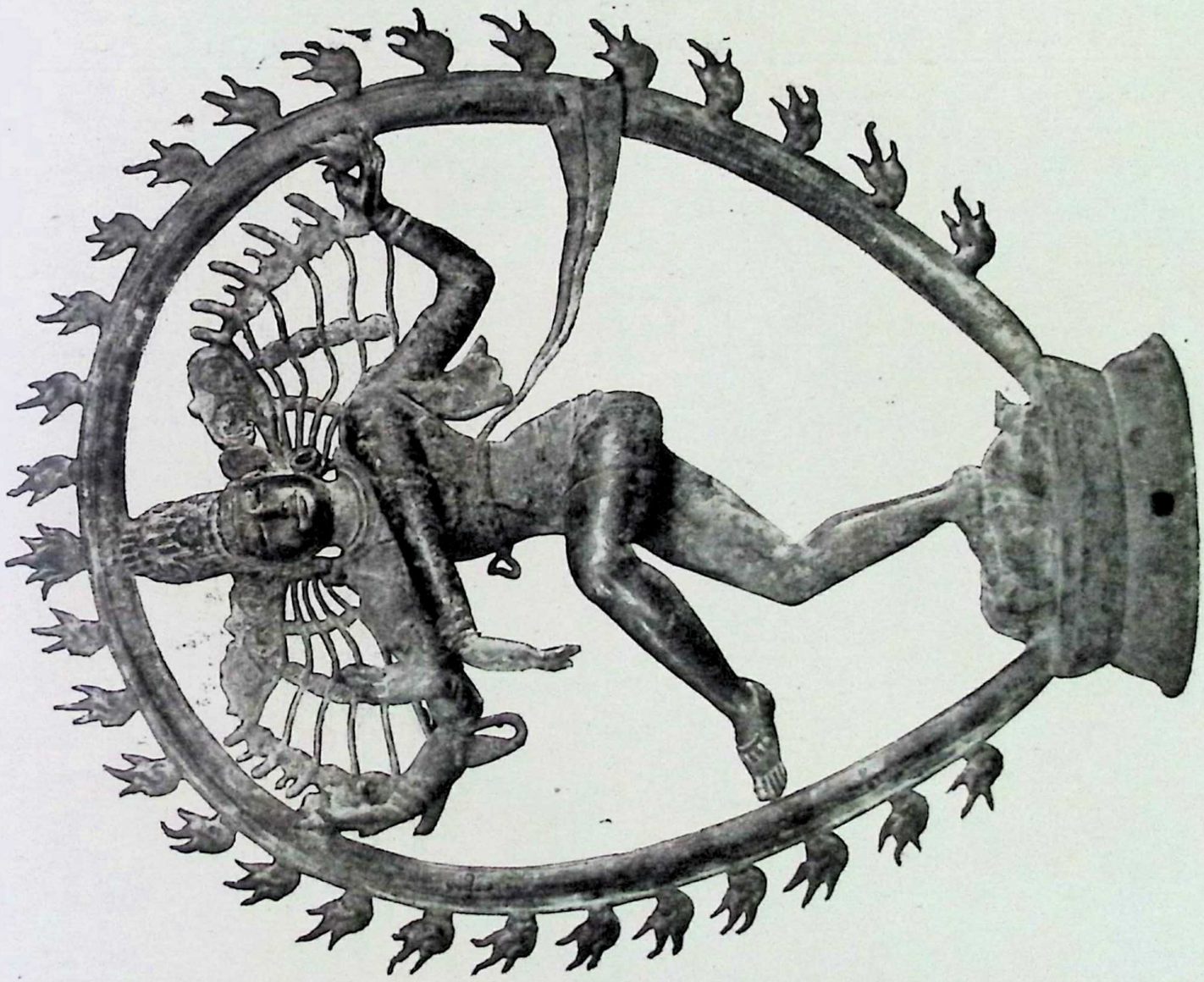

Fig. 117

PLATE LXXV.

Fig. 119. Gaṇeśa, from the same place as of Fig. 117; date same as of Fig. 117.

Fig. 120. Rear view of above.

Fig. 119

Fig. 120

PLATE LXXVI.

Fig. 121. Chaṇḍikeśvara, from the same place as of Fig. 119; date same as of Fig. 119.

Fig. 122. Rear view of above.

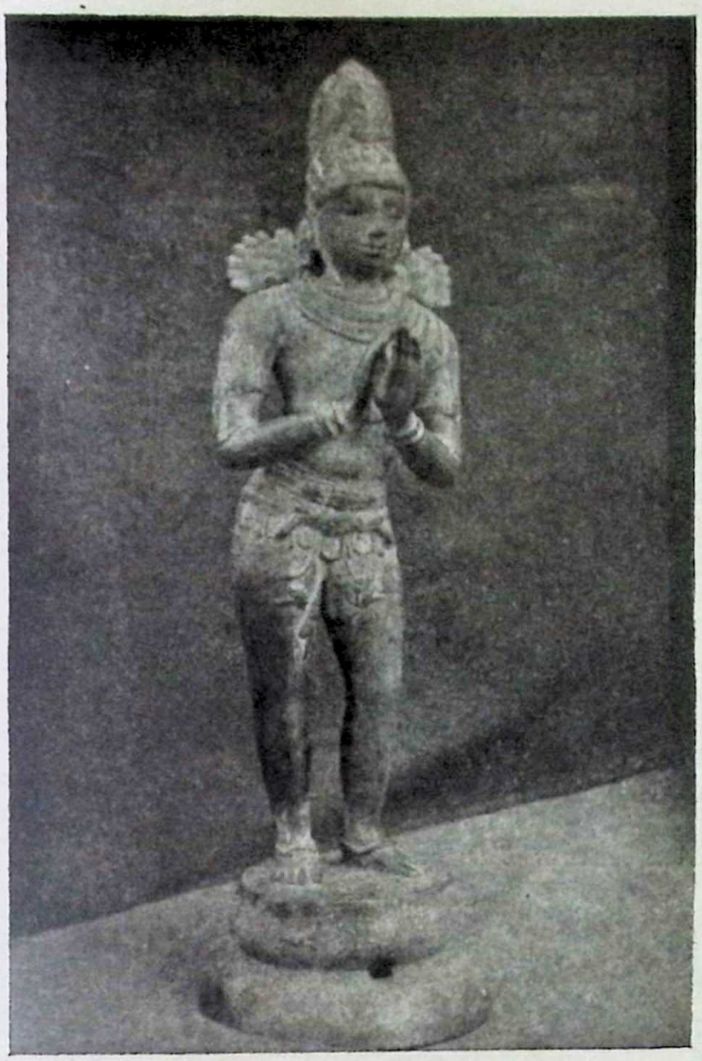

Fig. 121

Fig. 122

PLATE LXXVII.

Fig. 123. Vishṇu group, Peruntoṭṭam, Tanjore District; about the end of the 10th century or the beginning of the 11th century A.D.

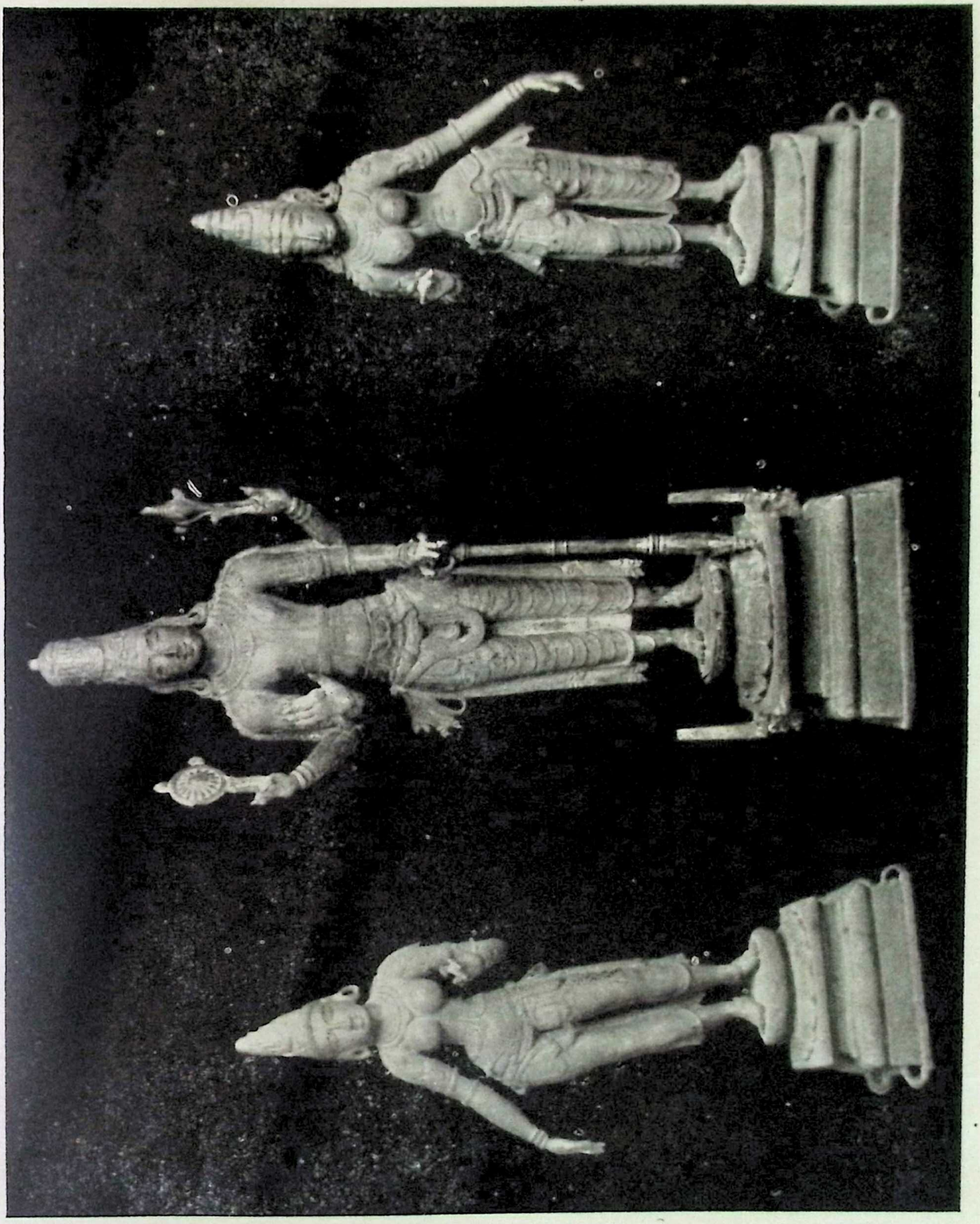

Fig. 123

PLATE LXXVIII.

Fig. 124. Rear view of Fig. 123.

Fig. 125. Jñānasambanda, Śivapuram, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the beginning of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 125

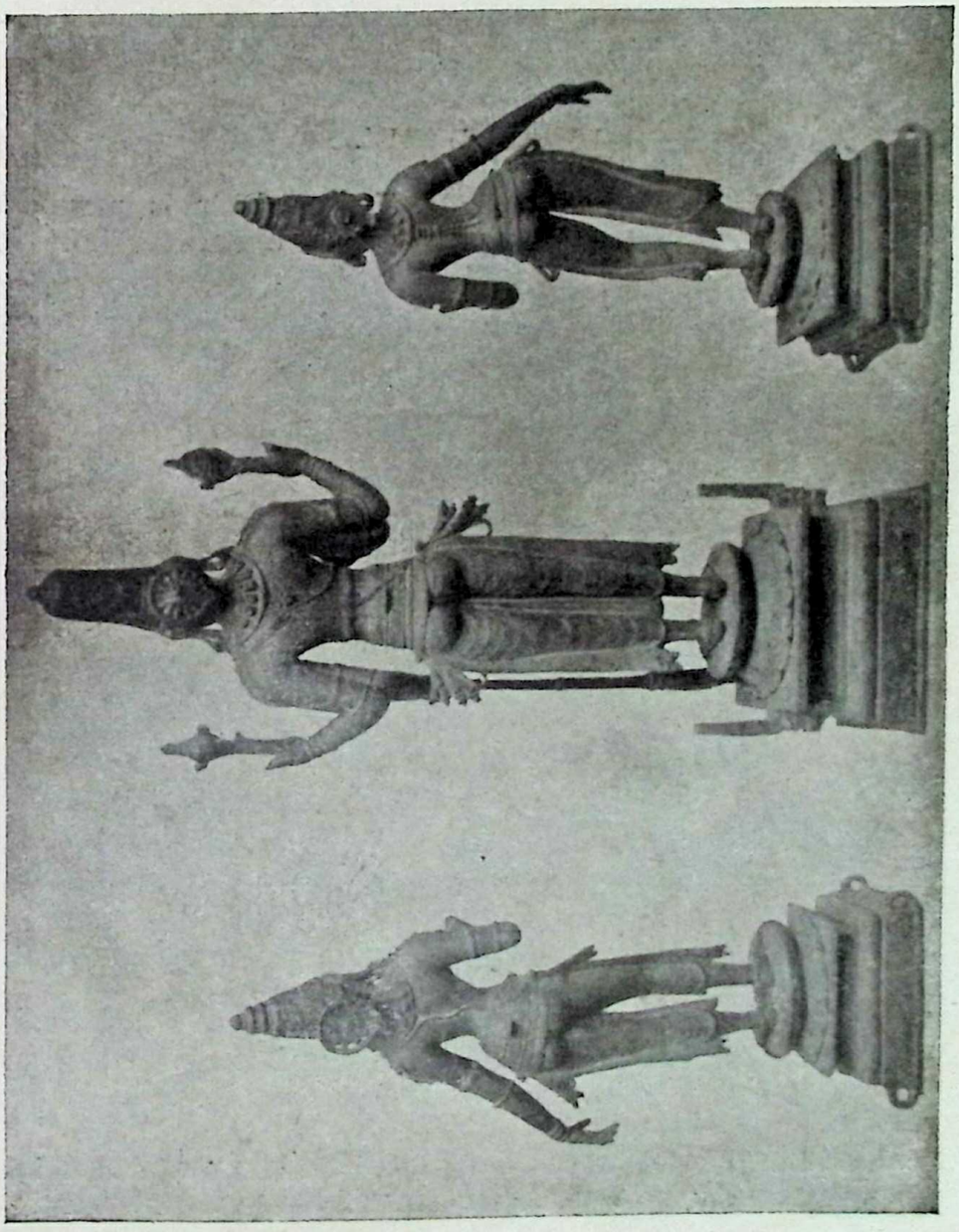

Fig. 124

PLATE LXXIX.

Fig. 126. Kalyāṇasundara group, Ṭiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery, Tanjore; about the first decade of the 11th century A.D.

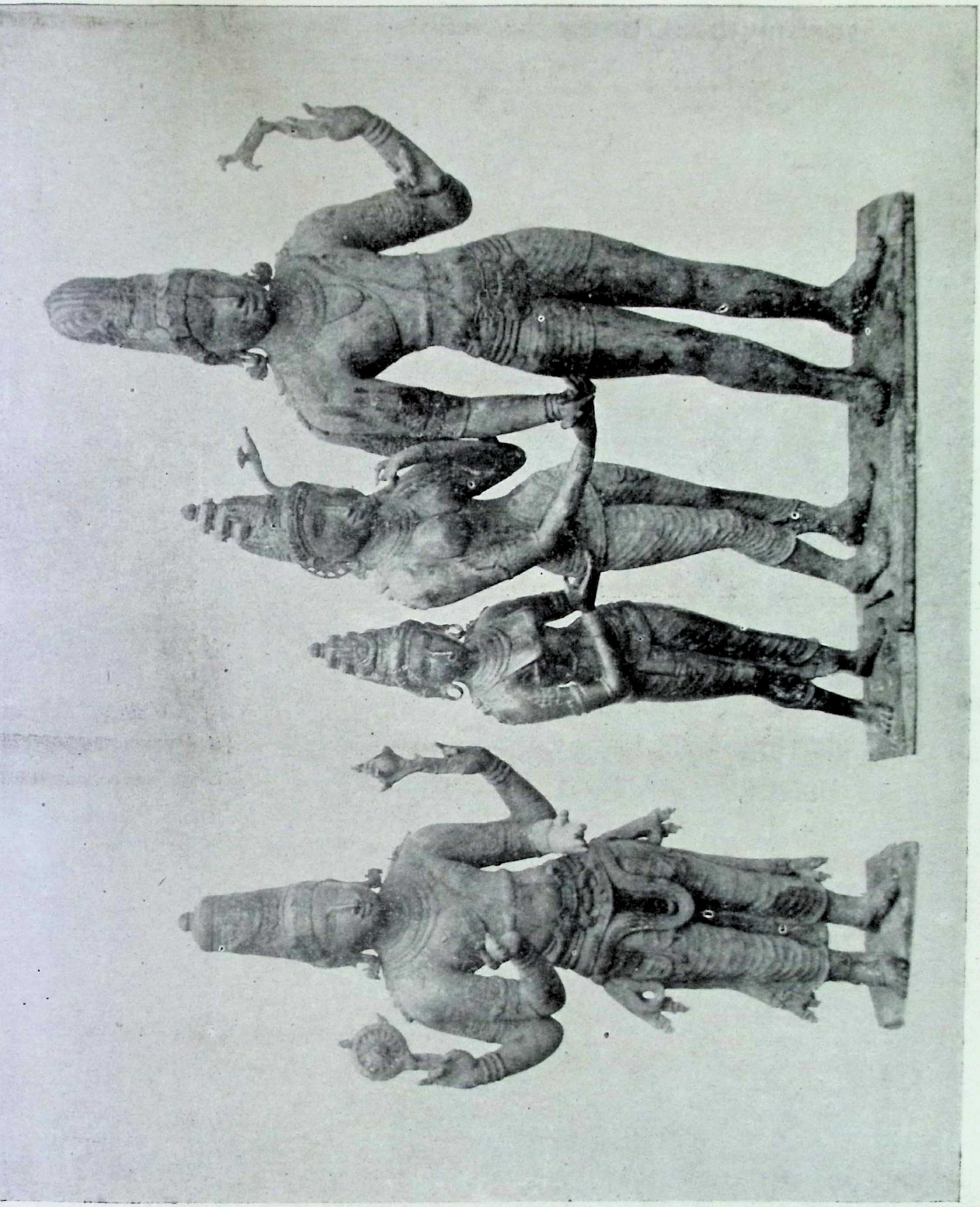

Fig. 126

PLATE LXXX.

Fig. 126 A. Śiva and Pārvatī of Kalyāṇasundara group of Fig. 126.

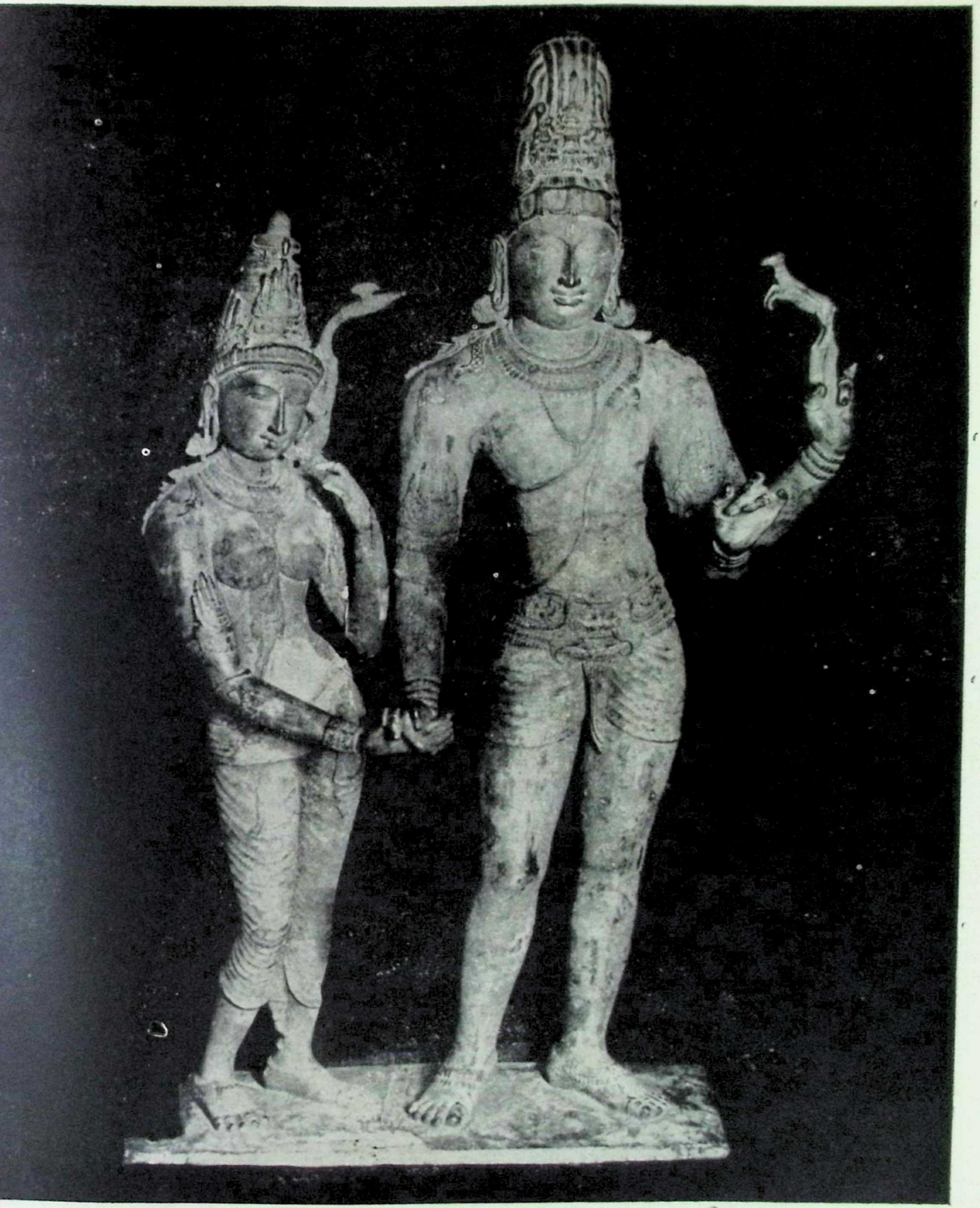

Fig. 126 A

PLATE LXXXI.

Fig. 126 B. Rear veiw of Fig. 126 A.

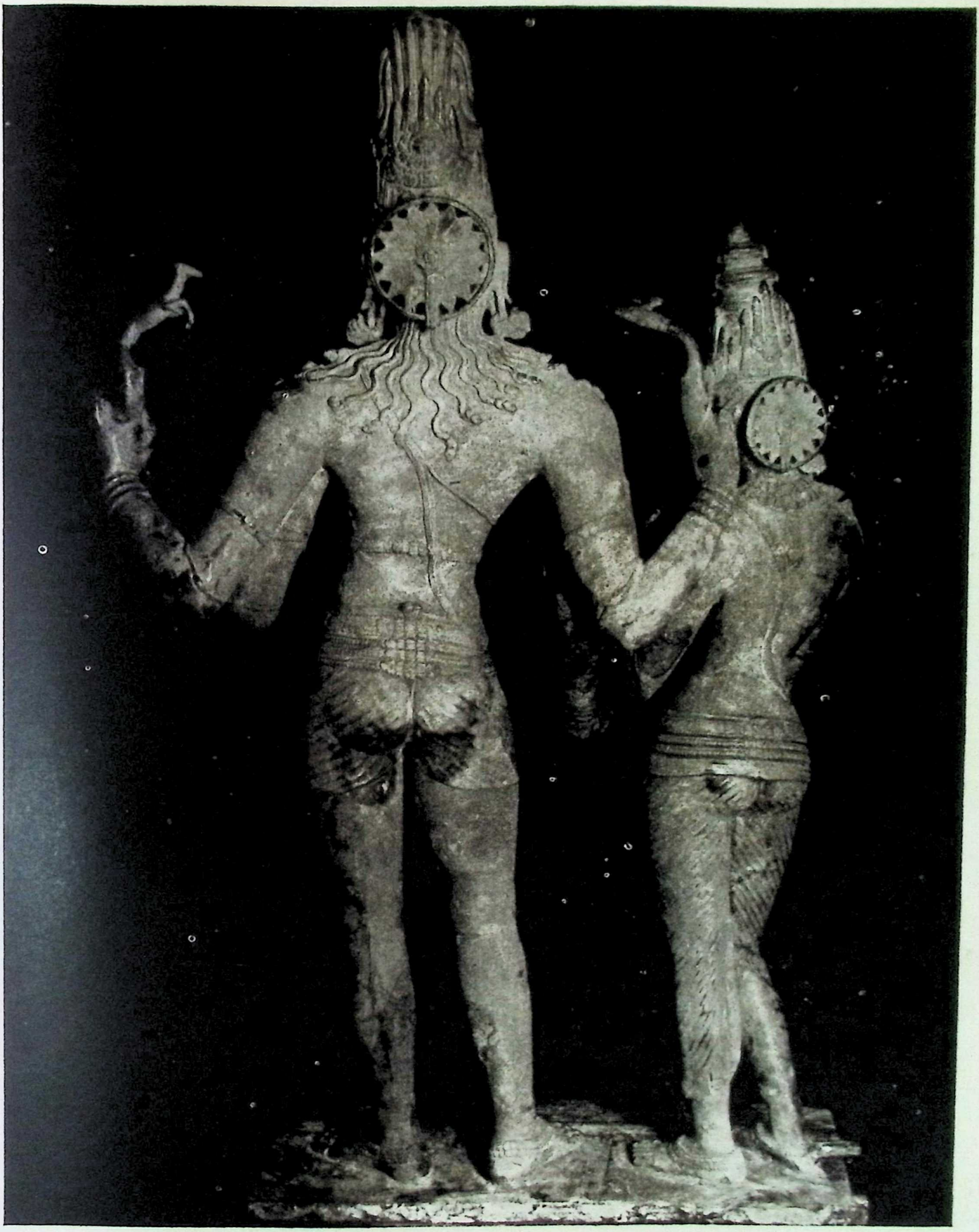

Fig. 126 B

PLATE LXXXII.

Figs. 127 and 127 A. Rear view of Fig. 126.

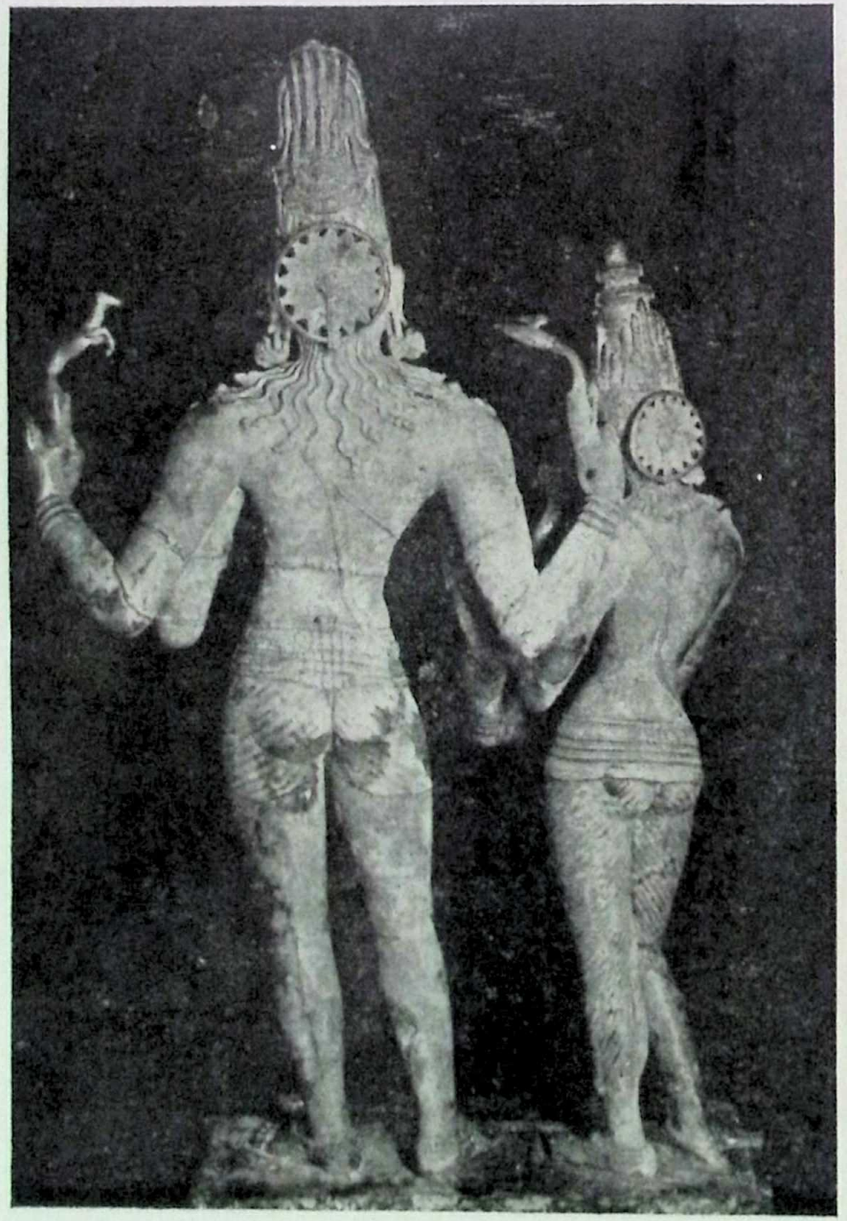

Fig. 127

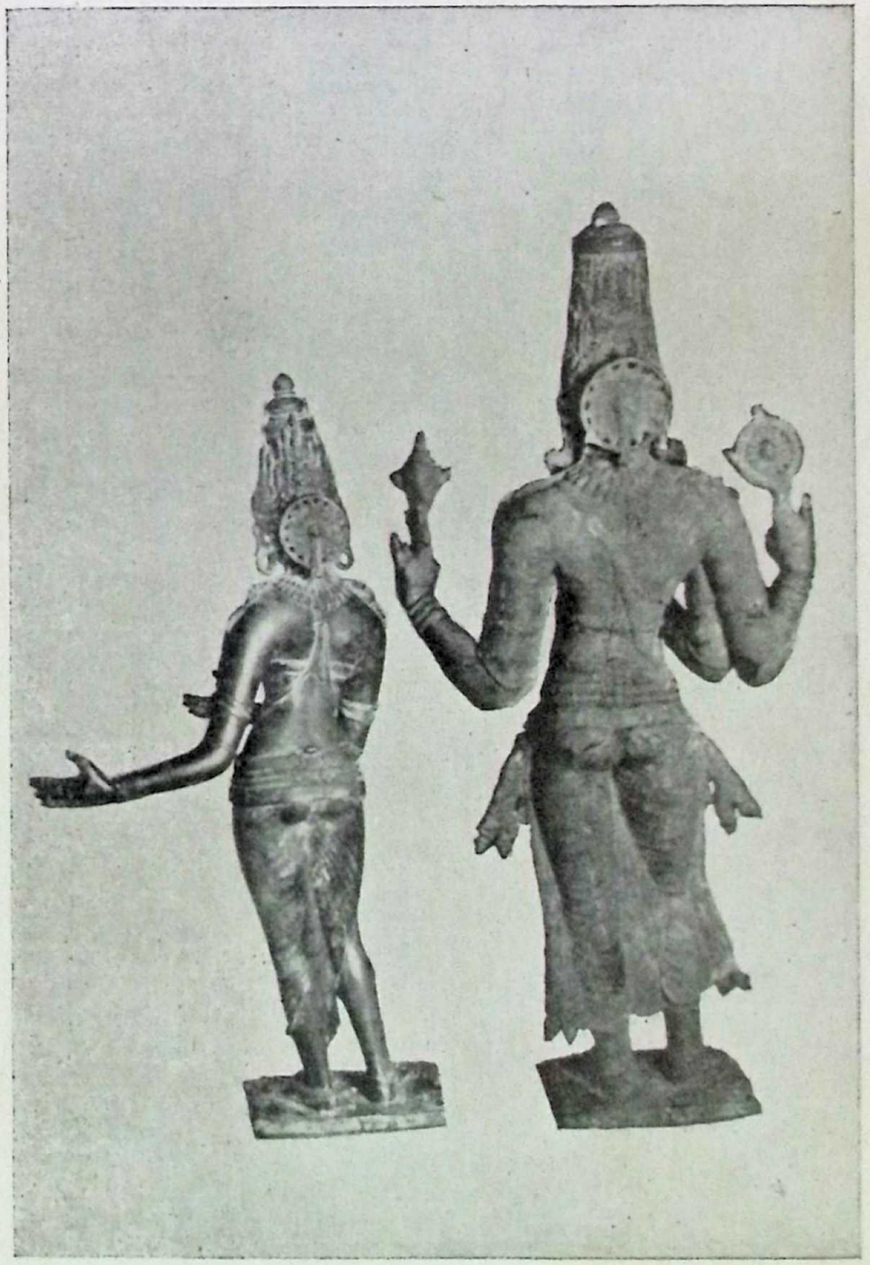

Fig. 127 A

PLATE LXXXIII.

Fig. 128. Śiva of Vṛishabhavāhana group; from the same place as of Fig. 126; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery, Tanjore; 1011 A.D.

Fig. 128

PLATE LXXXIV.

Fig. 129. Rear view of Fig. 128.

Fig. 129

PLATE LXXXV

Fig. 129 A. Pārvatī of Vṛishabhavāhana group of Fig. 128; 1012 A.D.

Fig. 129 B. Rear view of above.

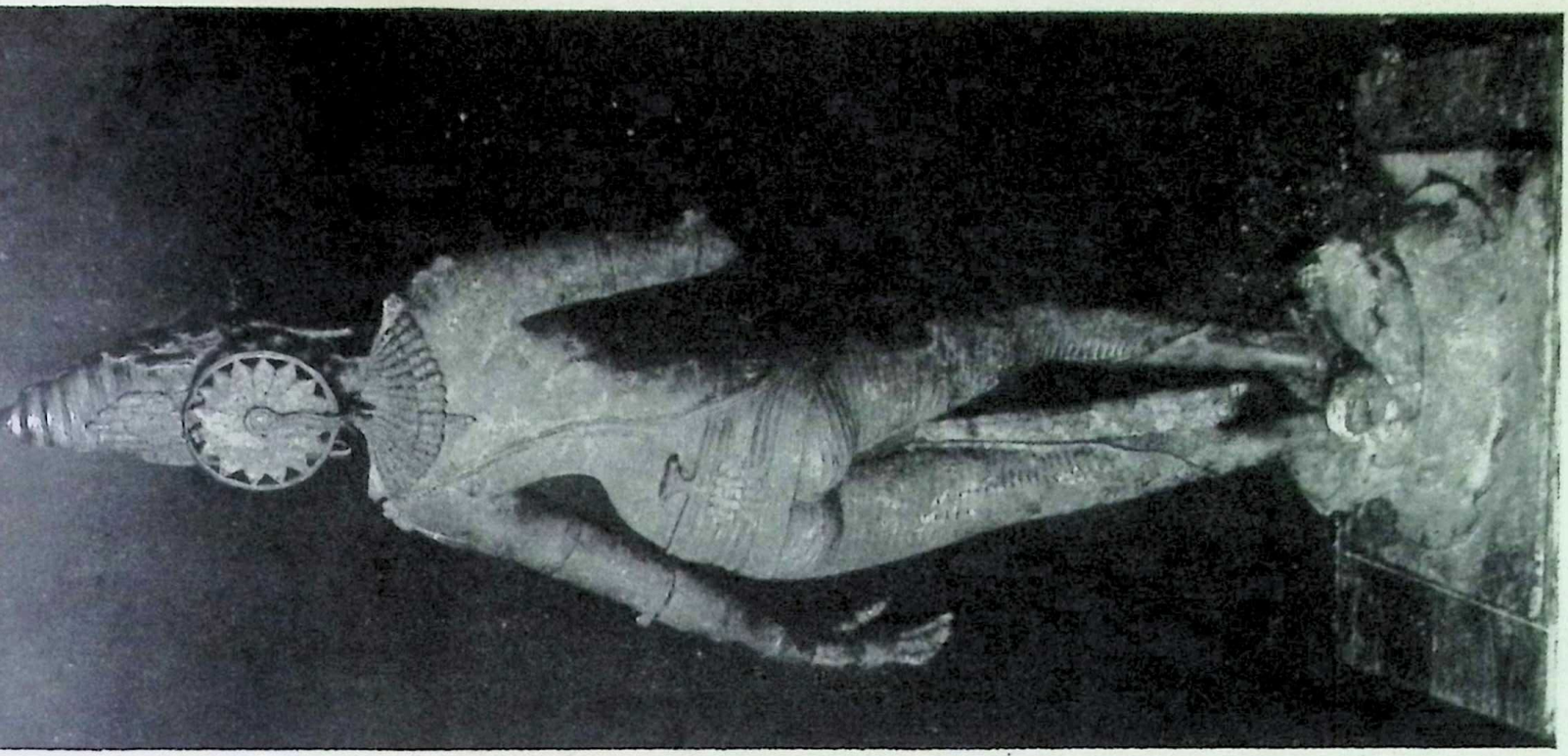

Fig. 129 B

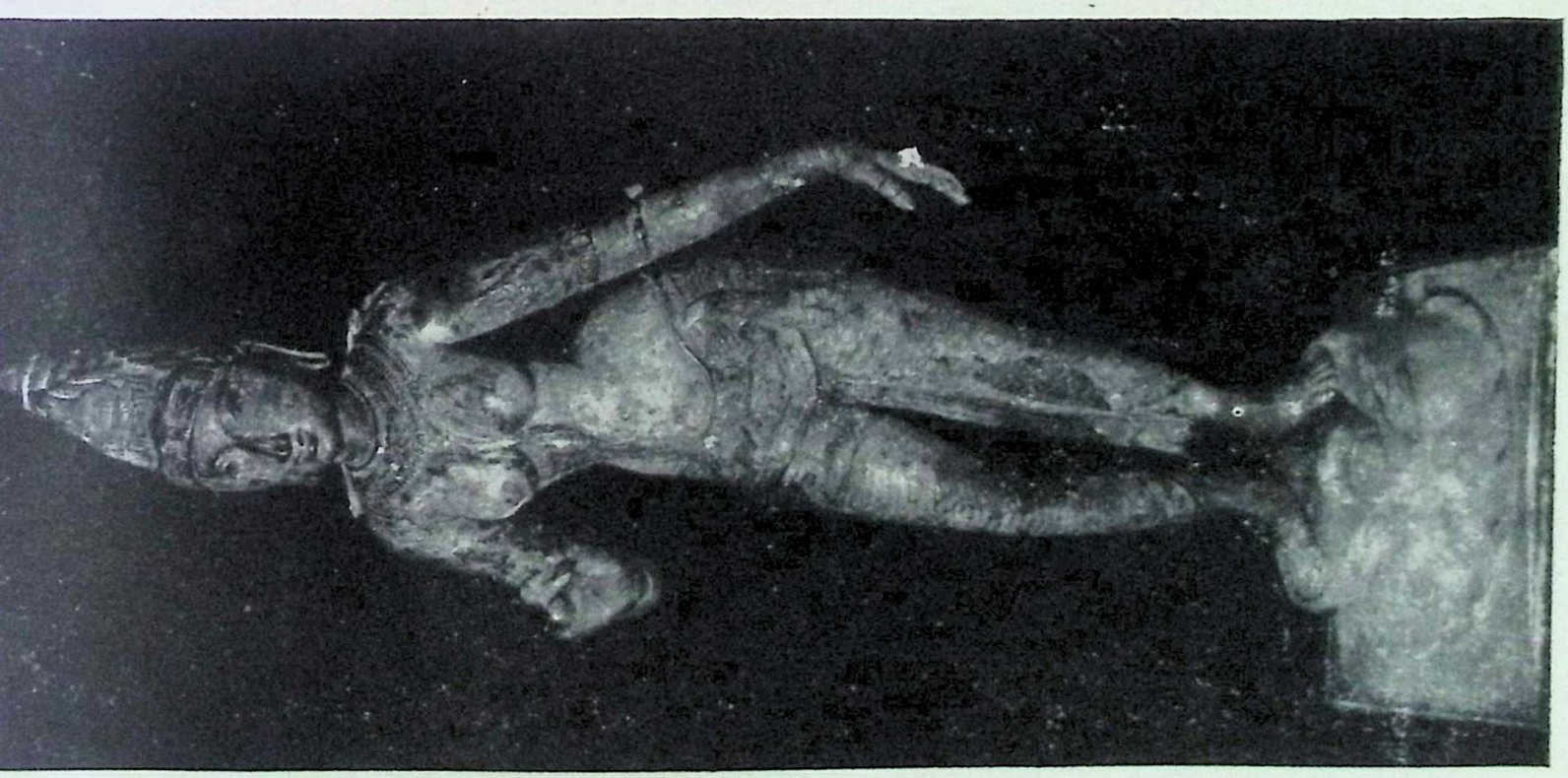

Fig. 129 A

PLATE LXXXVI.

Fig. 130. Bhairava, in the same place as of Fig. 128; about the same period as of Fig. 128.

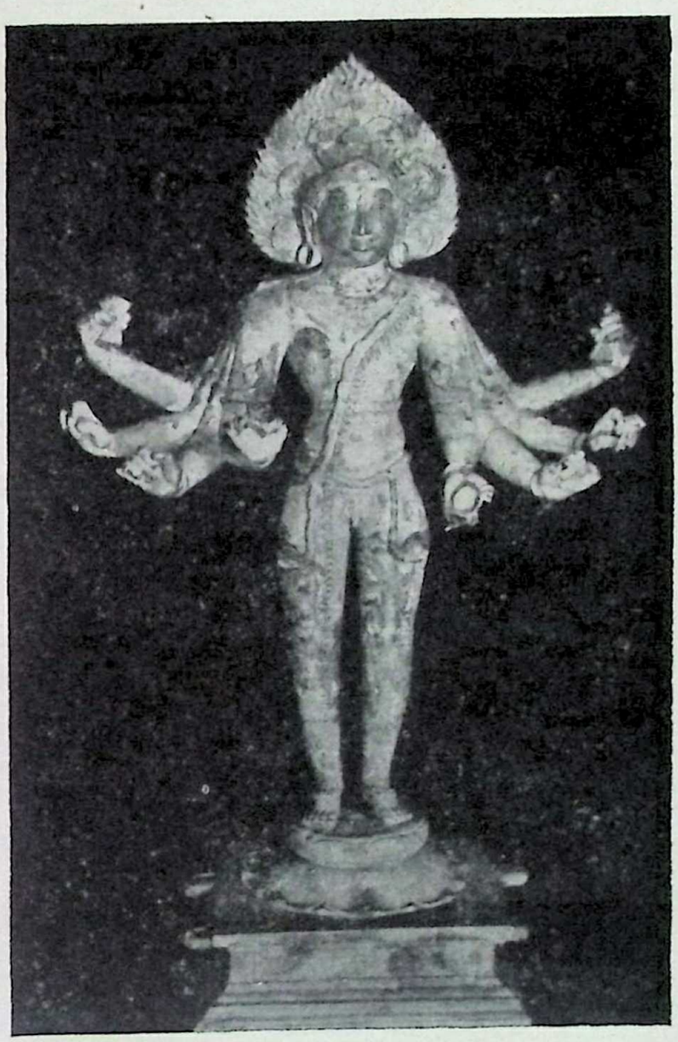

Fig. 130

PLATE LXXXVII.

Fig. 131. Ardhanārī, from the same place as of Fig. 130: now in the Madras Museum; date same as of Fig. 130.

Fig. 131

PLATE LXXXVIII.

Fig. 132. Rear view of Fig. 131.

Fig. 133. Somāskanda, from the same place as of Fig. 131; date same as of Fig. 131.

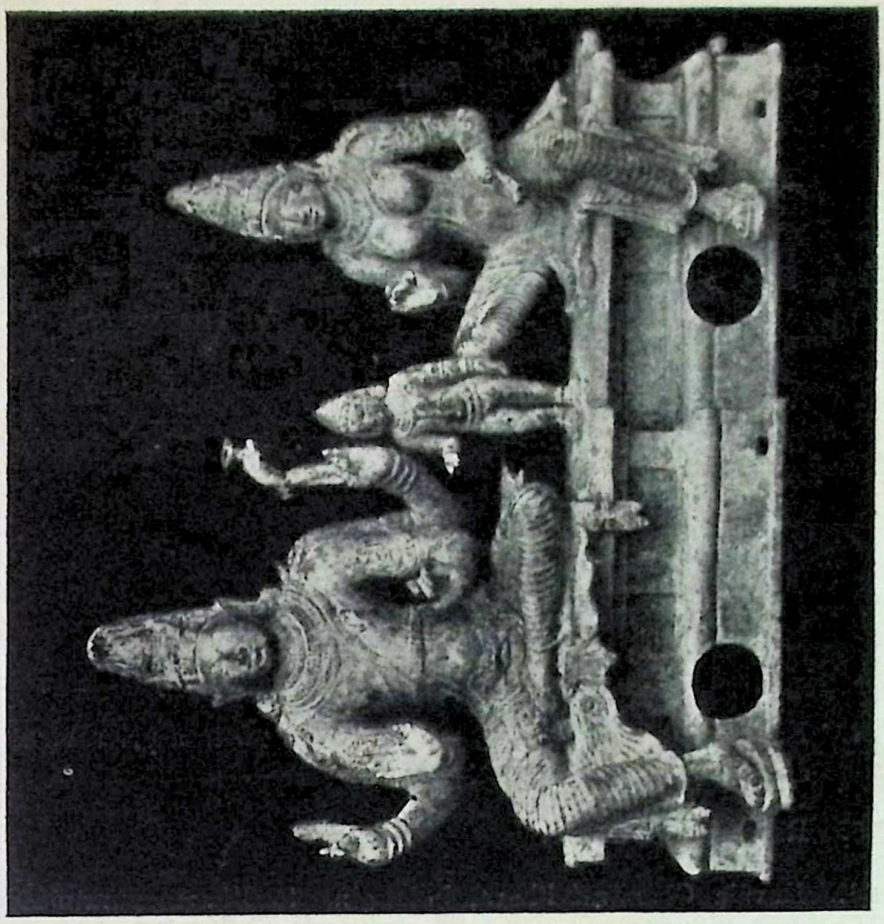

Fig. 133

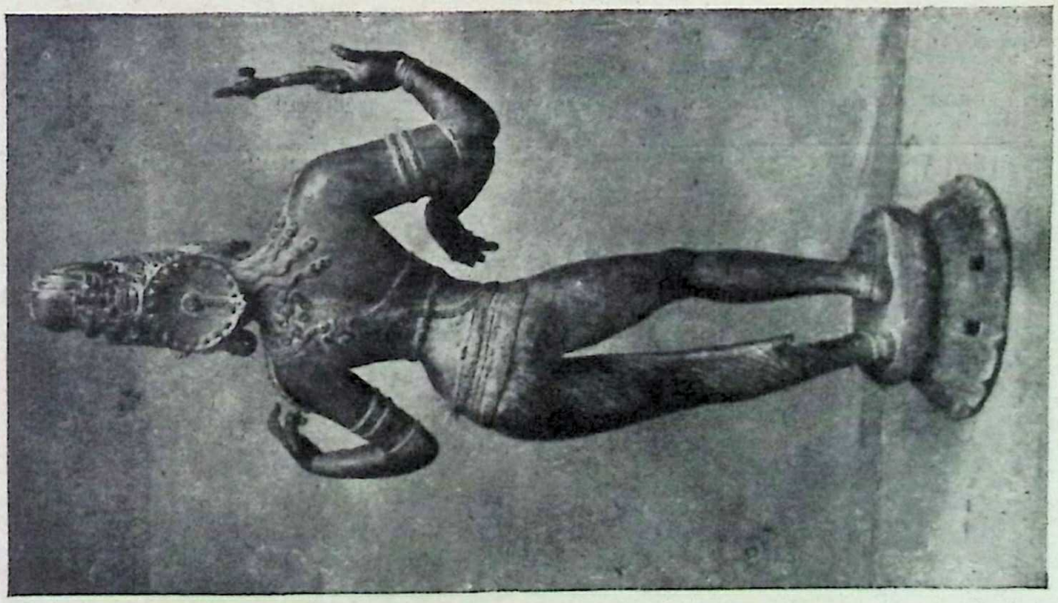

Fig. 132

PLATE LXXXIX.

Fig. 134. Kalyāṇasundara, locality not known; now in a private collection in Bombay; date same as of Fig. 133.

Fig. 135. Rear view of above.

Fig. 136. Kevala Chandraśekhara, belonging to Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Māyūram, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 134.

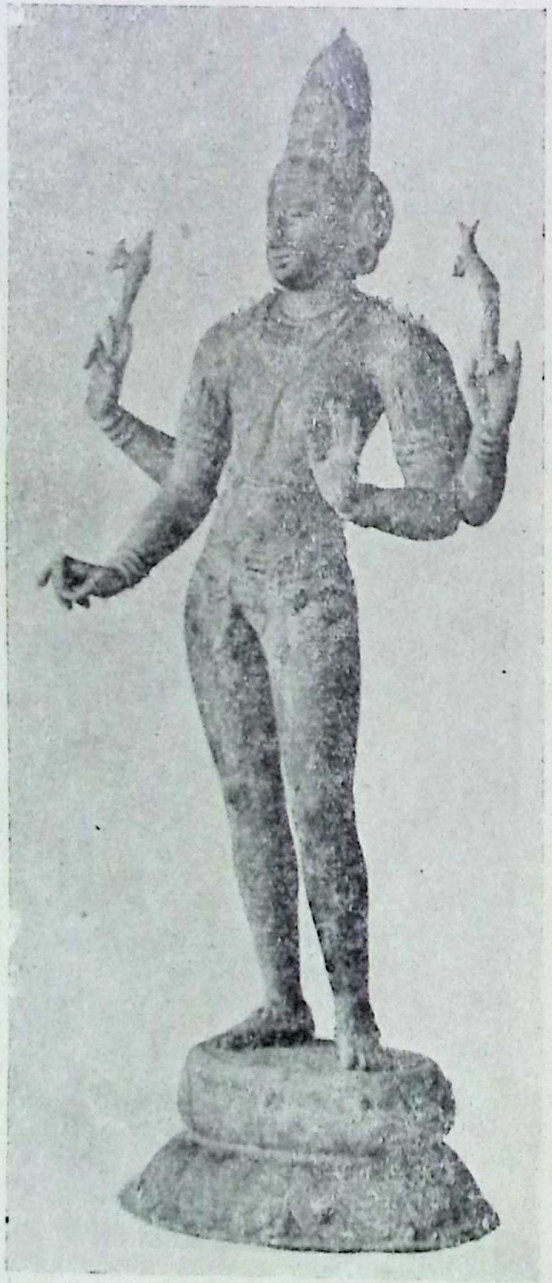

Fig. 134

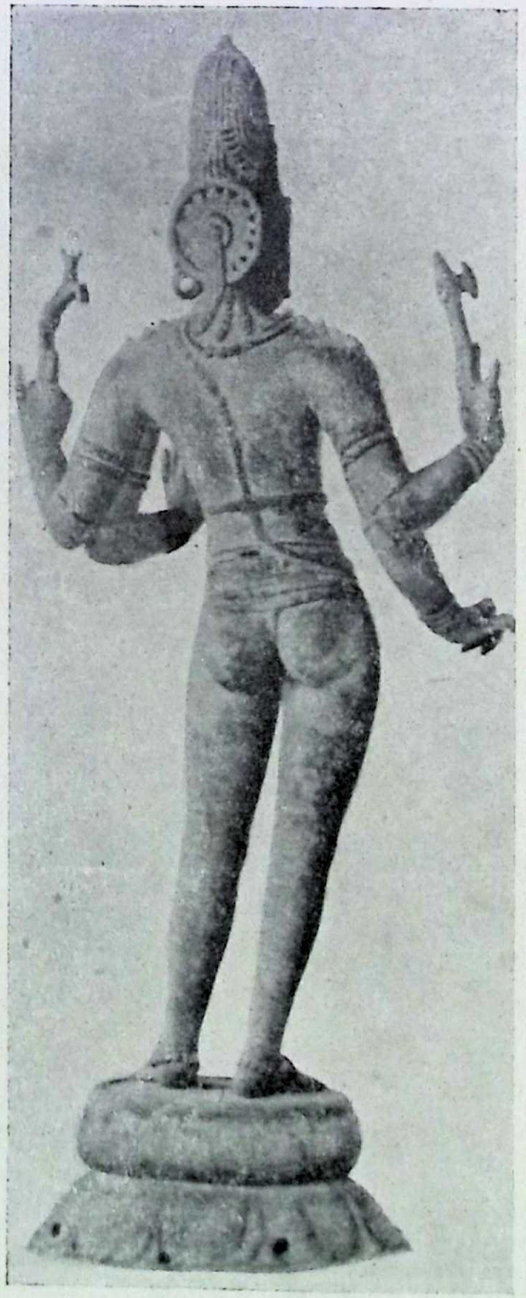

Fig. 135

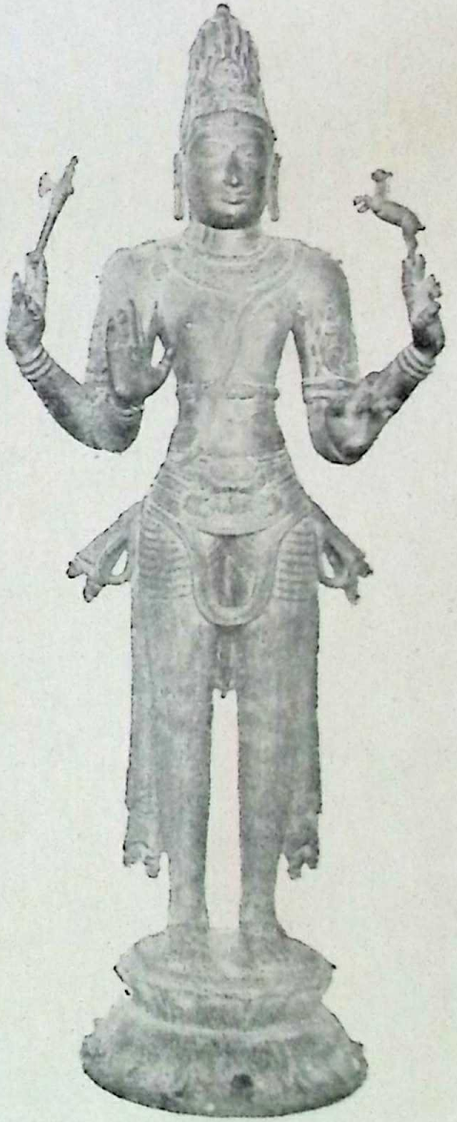

Fig. 136

PLATE XC.

Fig. 137. Naṭeśa (with Śivakāmī); under worship in the Big Temple at Tanjore; date about 1010 A.D.

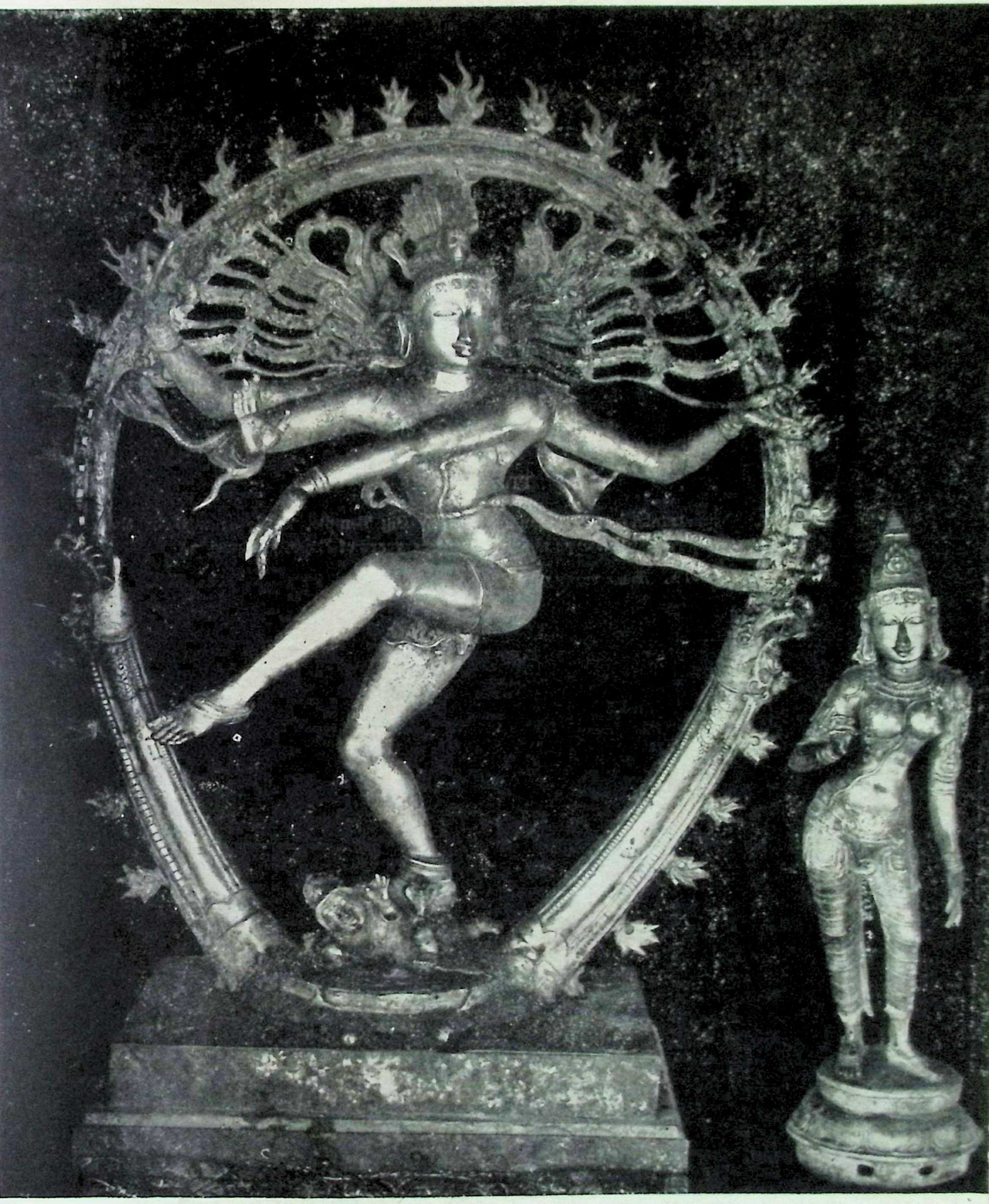

Fig. 187

PLATE XCI.

Fig. 138. Tripurāntaka group, belonging to the Big Temple, Tanjore; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery; about the closing years of Rājarāja I's reign.

Figs. 139 and 139 A. Rear views of above.

Fig. 189 A

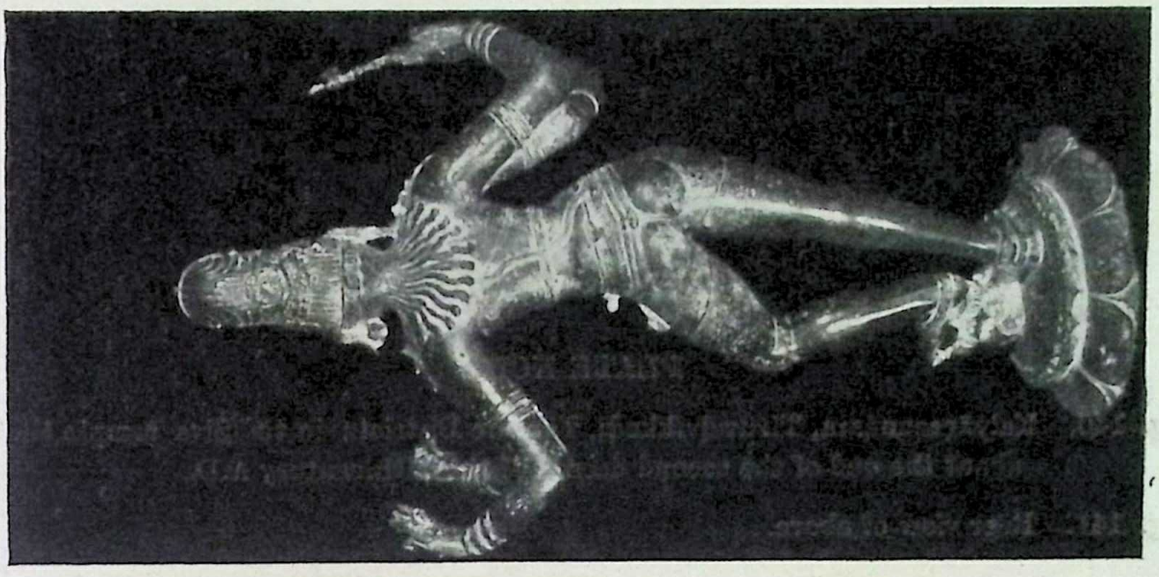

Fig. 189

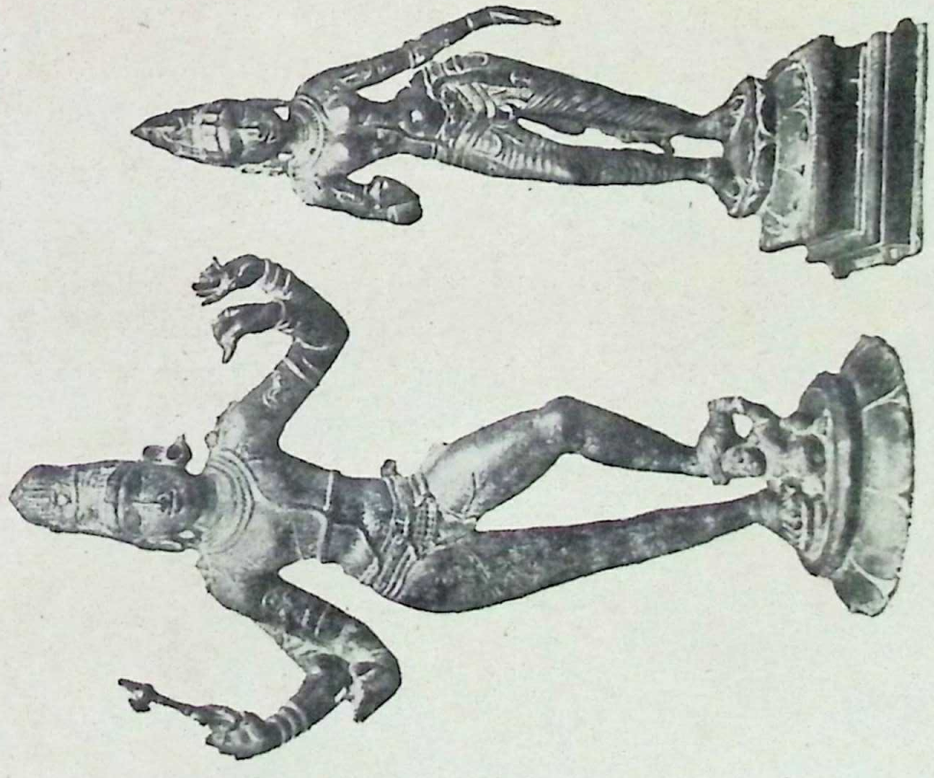

Fig. 188

PLATE XCII.

Fig. 140. Kalyāṇasundara, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the end of the second decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 141. Rear view of above.

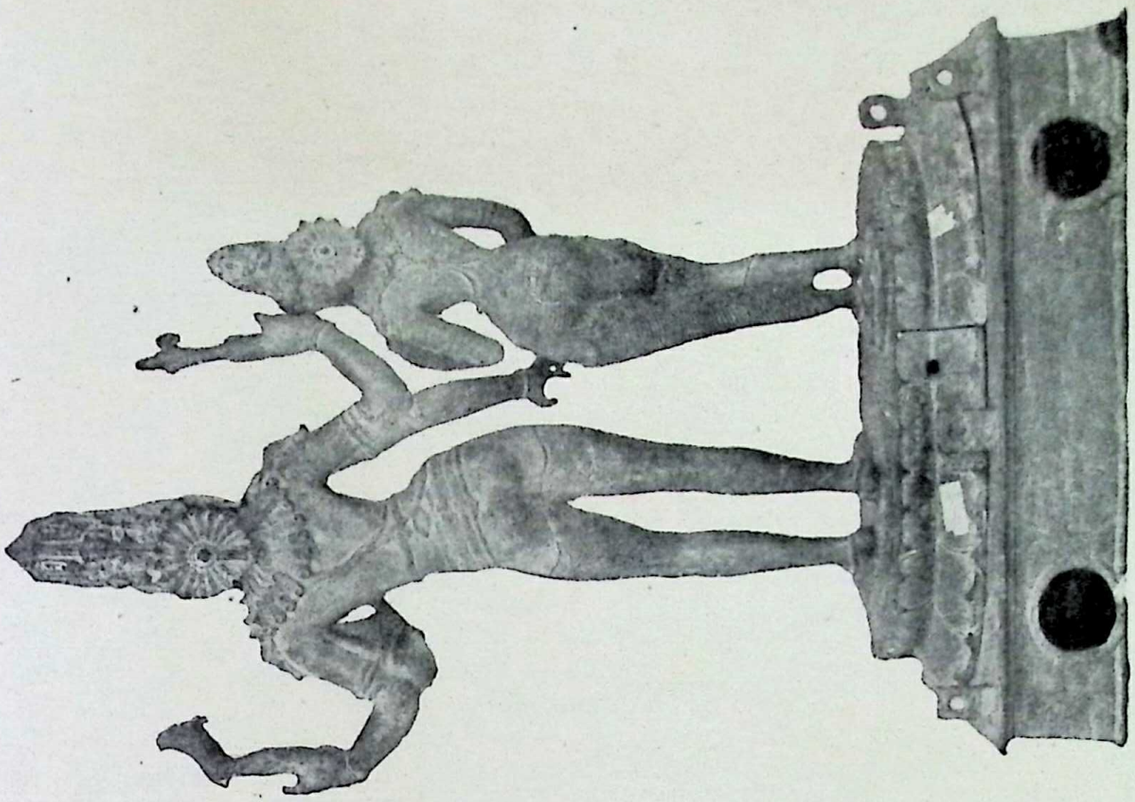

Fig. 141

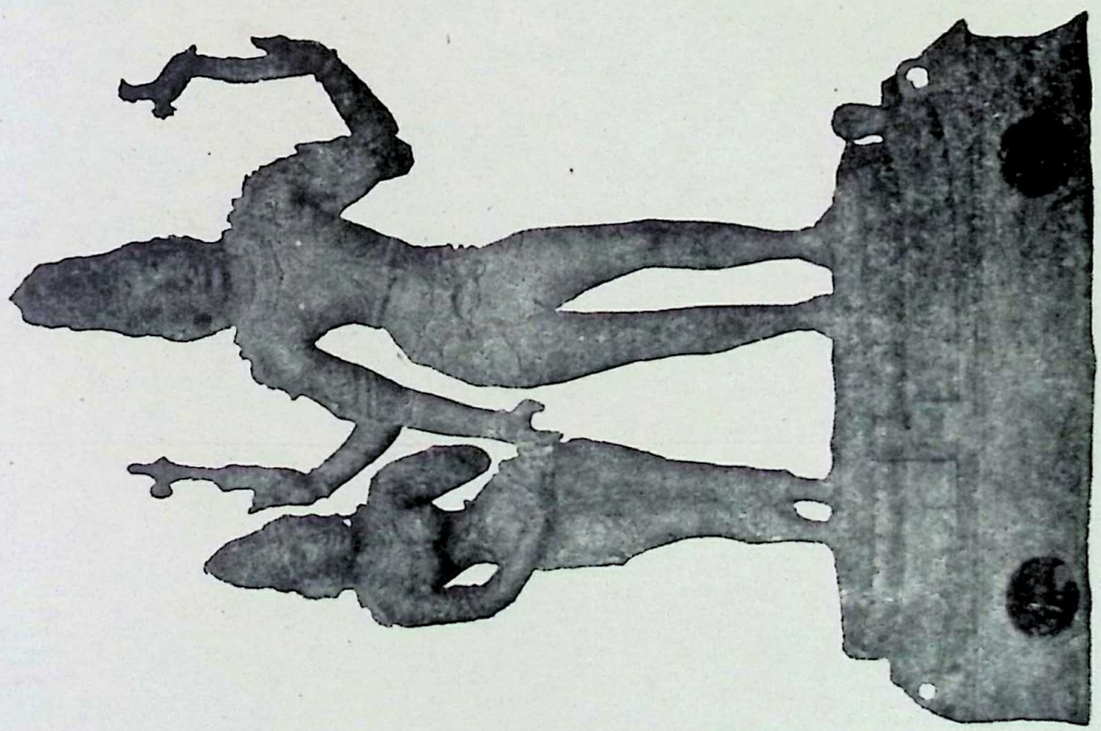

Fig. 140

PLATE XCIII.

Fig. 142. Tripurāntaka, Māyūram, Tanjore District ; in the Śiva temple there ; about the beginning of the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 143. Rear view of above.

Fig. 142

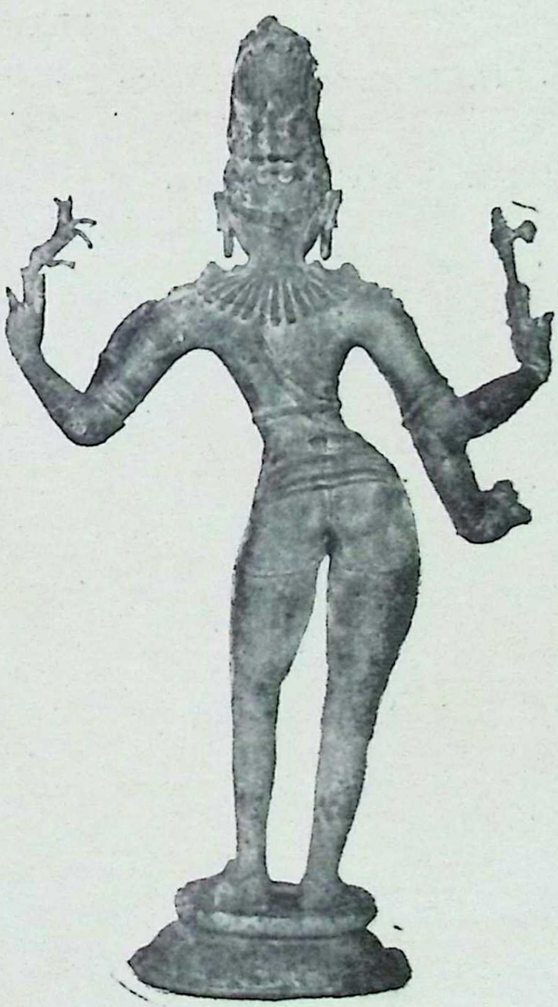

Fig. 143

PLATE XCIV.

Fig. 144. Tripurāntaka, Veḷḷanūr, Tiruchirappalli District ; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 142.

Fig. 145. Rear view of above.

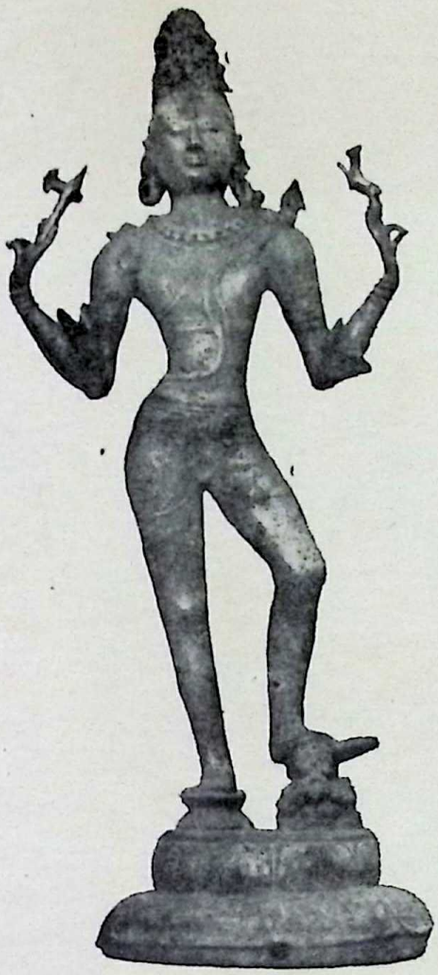

Fig. 144

Fig. 145

PLATE XCV.

Fig. 146. Jaṭā-makuṭa Lokeśvara, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District ; about the end of the first quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig 147. Chaṇḍikeśvara, locality not known ; now in a private collection ; about the beginning of the second quarter of the 11th century A.D.

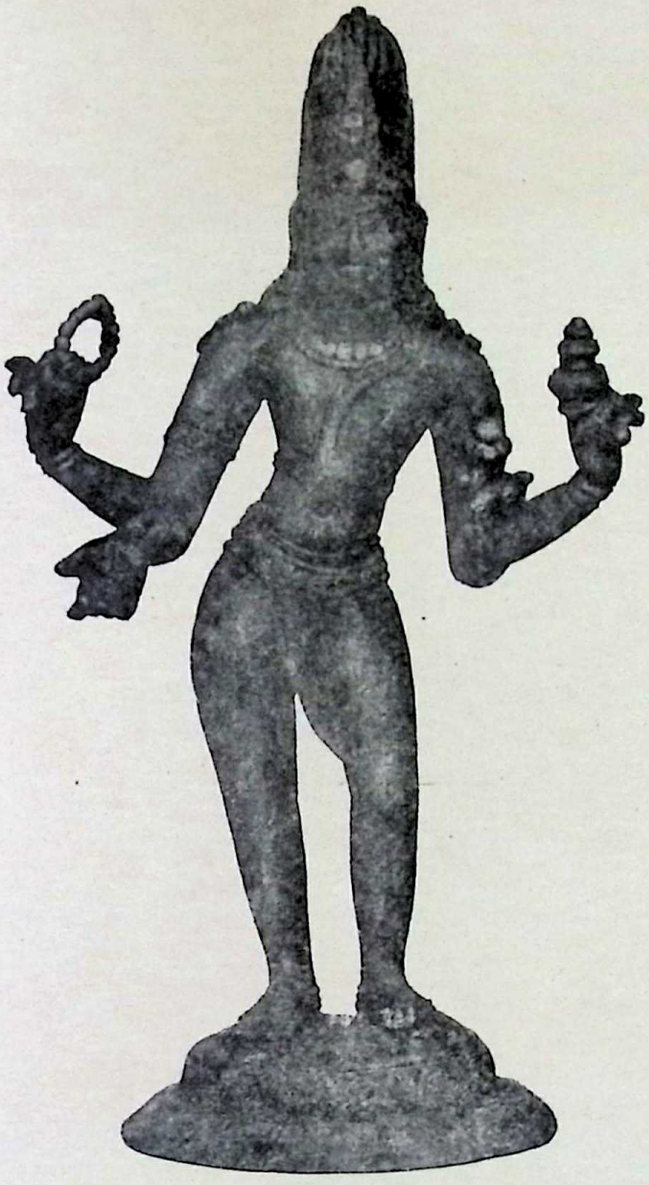

Fig. 146

Fig. 147

PLATE XCVI.

Fig. 148. Kalyāṇasundara group, Konerirājapuram, Tanjore District; the Pārvatī and Lakshmī are in a private collection while the whereabouts of Śiva and Vishṇu are not known; about the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 151. Lakshmī of the above group.

(Figs. 149 and 150 are on Plate XCVII.)

Fig. 148

Fig. 151

PLATE XCVII.

Fig. 149. Pārvatī of the group of Kalyāṇasundara of Fig. 148.

Fig. 150. Rear view of above.

Fig. 149

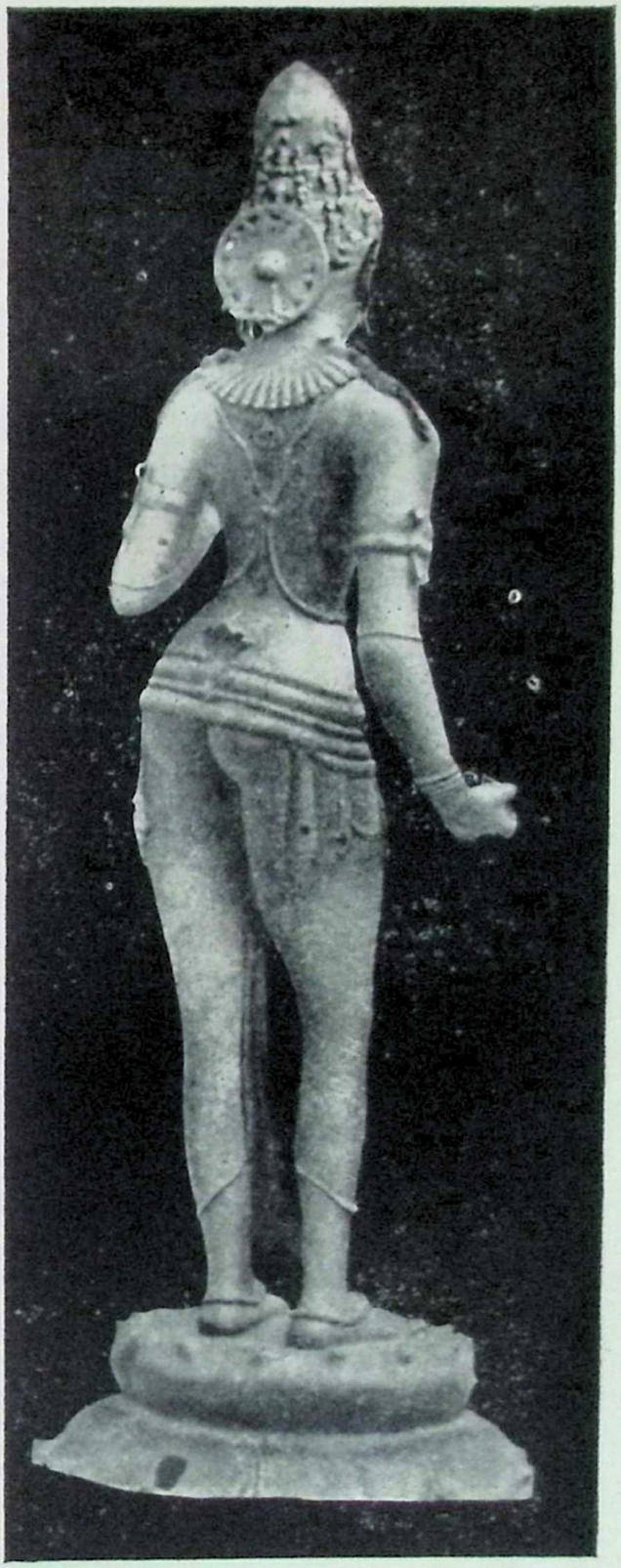

Fig 150

PLATE XCVIII.

Fig. 152. Buddha, standing, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; about the end of second quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 153. Śrīnivāsa, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District; in the Vishṇu temple there (?); about the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 152

Fig. 153

PLATE XCIX.

Fig. 154. Śrīnivāsa group, Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr, Tanjore District; about the end of the third decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 155. Rear view of above.

Fig. 154

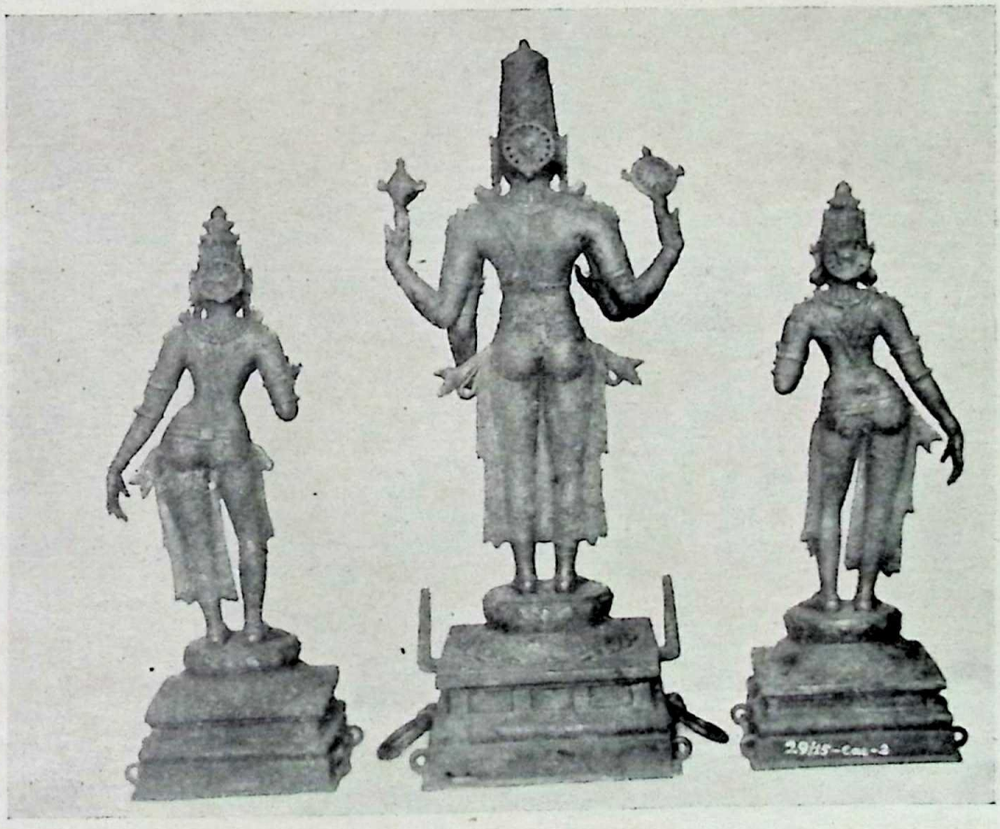

Fig. 155

PLATE C.

Fig. 156. Kirātamūrti, Rādhānarasiṁhapuram, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 154.

Fig. 156

PLATE CI.

Fig. 157. Naṭeśa, Semaṅgalam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 156.

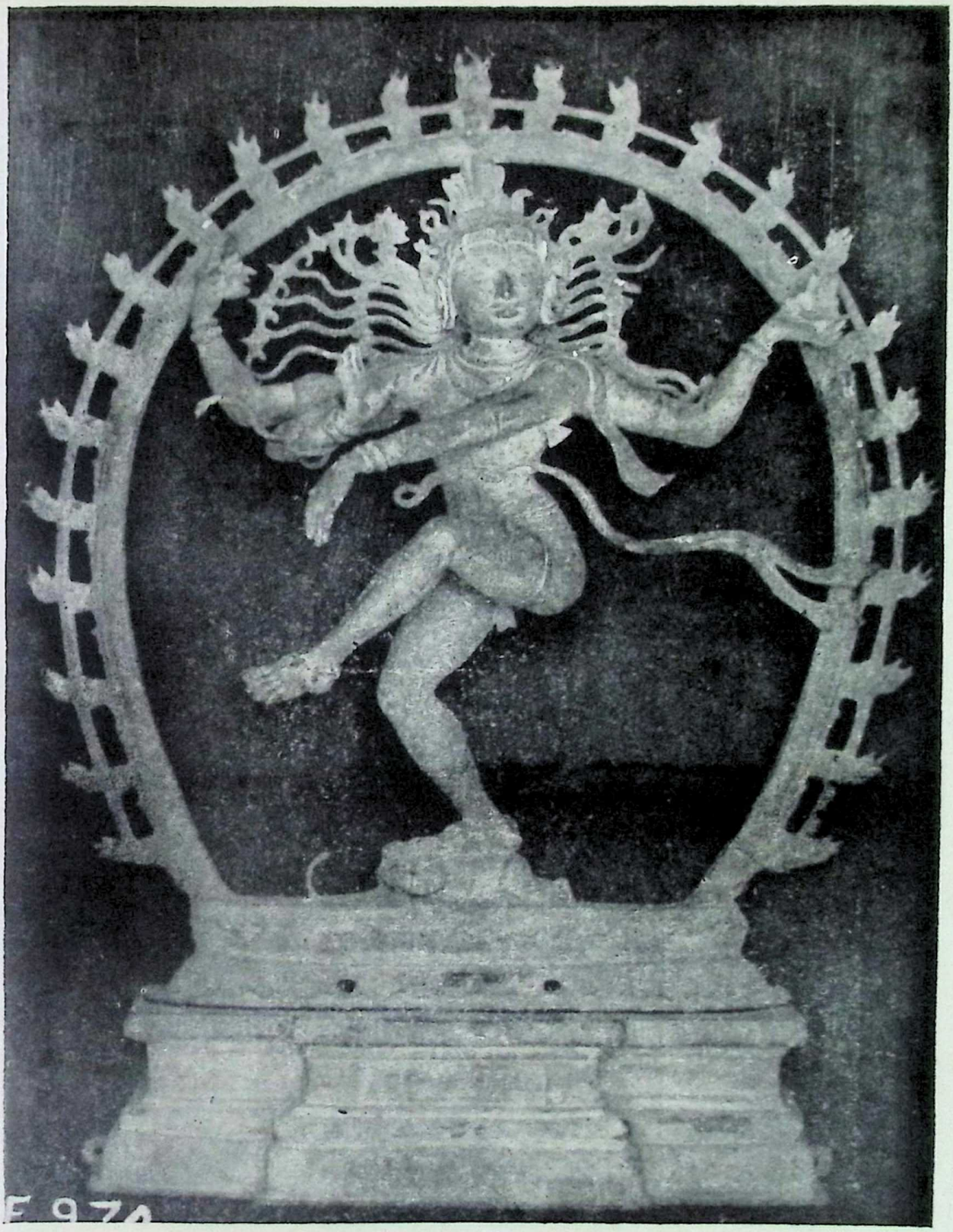

Fig. 157

PLATE CII.

Fig. 158. Rear veiw of Fig. 157.

Fig. 159. Pārvati, from the same place as of Fig. 157; date same as of Fig. 157.

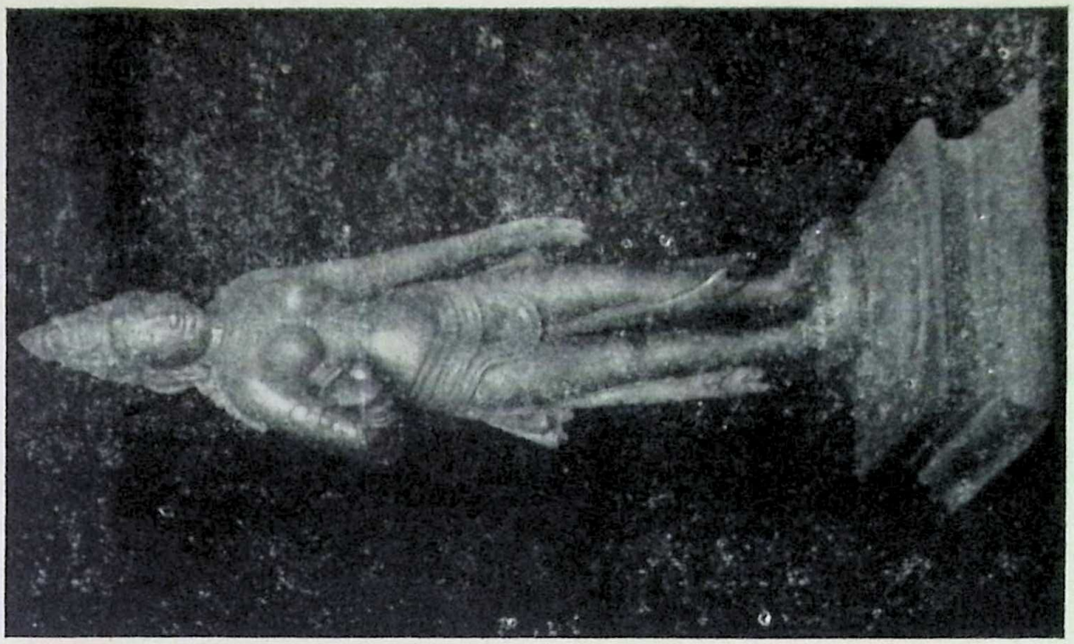

Fig. 159

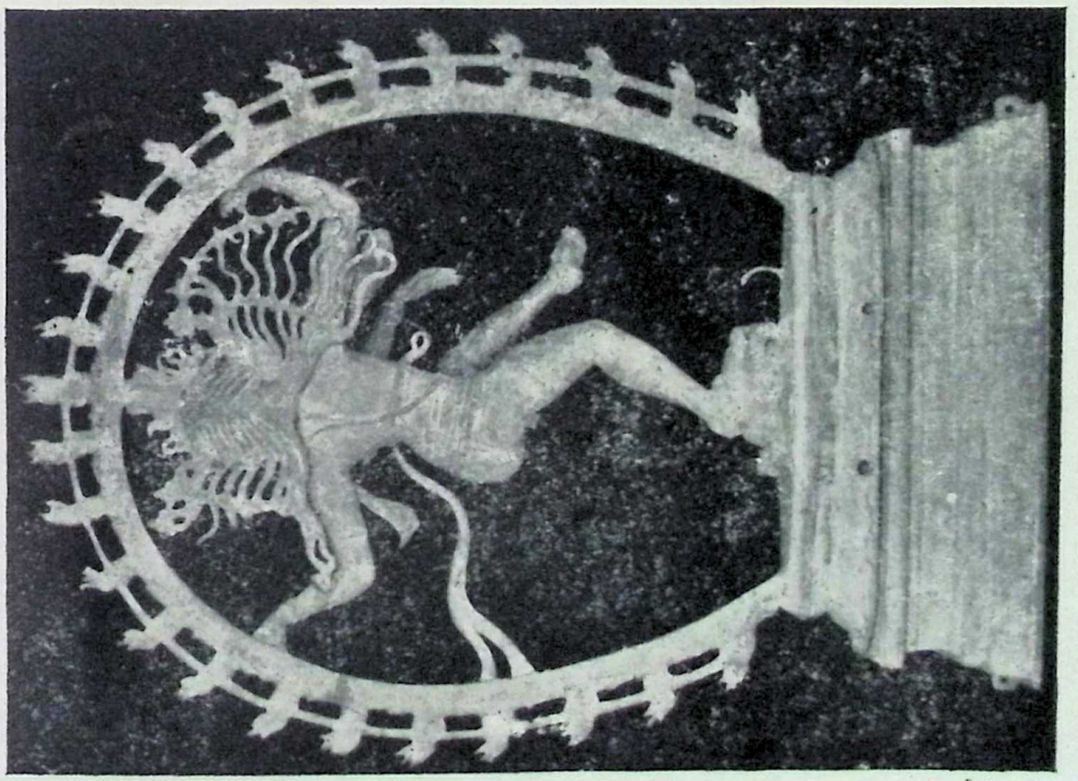

Fig. 158

PLATE CIII.

Fig. 160. Chaṇḍikeśvara, from the same place as of Fig. 157 ; date same as of Fig. 157.

Fig. 161. Rear view of above.

Fig. 160

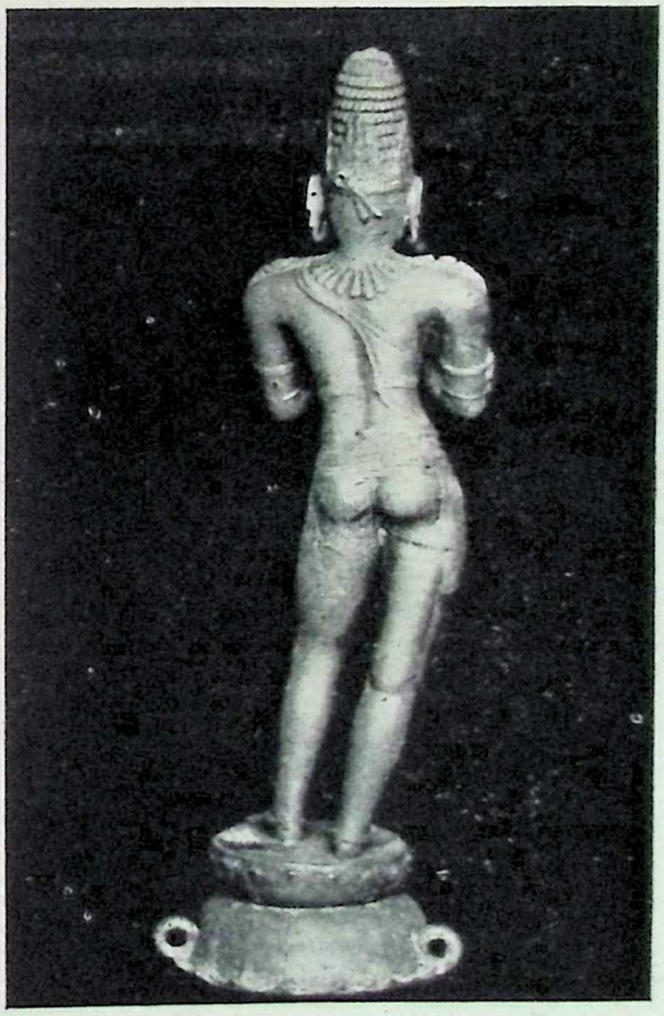

Fig. 161

PLATE CIV.

Fig. 162. Ganeśa, from the same place as of Fig. 160 ; now in the Trivandrum Museum ; date same as of Fig. 160.

Fig. 163. Vināḍhara, from the same place as above ; date same as above.

Fig. 162

Fig. 163

PLATE CV.

Fig. 164. Naṭeśa, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu, Chittoor District ; about the fourth decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 164

PLATE CVI

Fig. 165. Rear view of Fig. 164.

Fig. 165

PLATE CVII.

Fig. 166. Tripurāntaka with consort, Tranquebar, Tanjore District: date same as- of Fig. 164.

Fig. 167. Rear view of above.

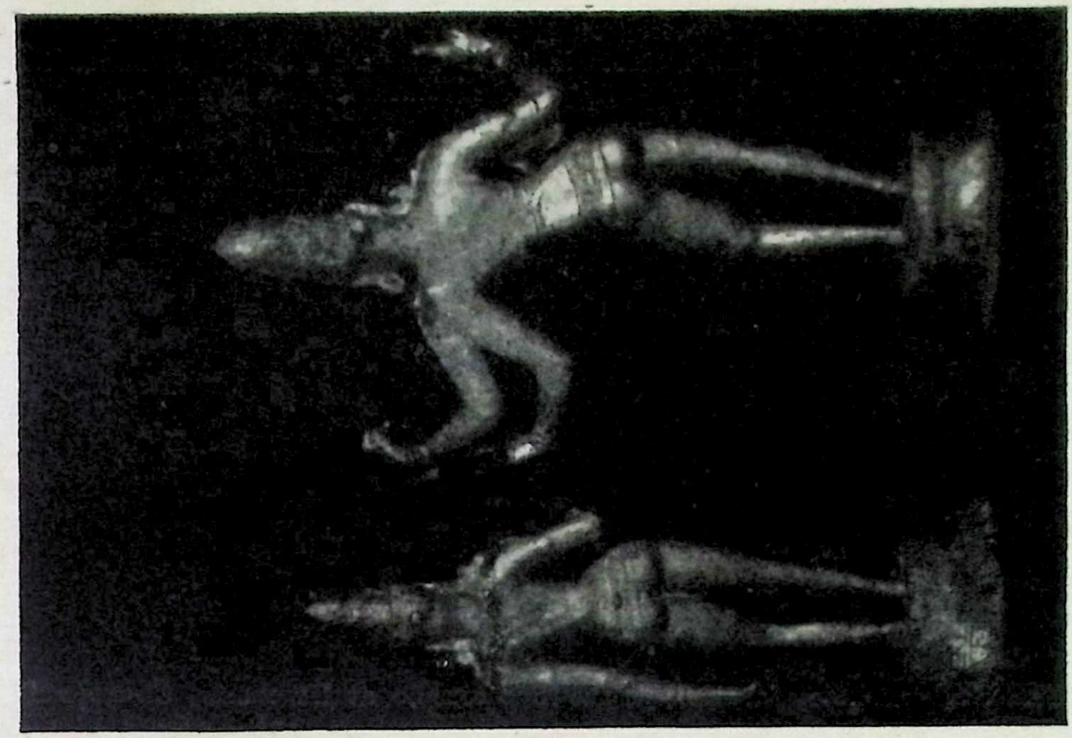

Fig. 167

Fig. 166

PLATE CVIII.

Fig. 168. Śoḷa-mā-devī, formerly in the Śiva temple at Kālahasti, Chittoor District: now its whereabouts not known; date same as of Fig. 166.

Fig. 169. Naṭeśa with Śivakāmasundarī, Puñjai, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 168.

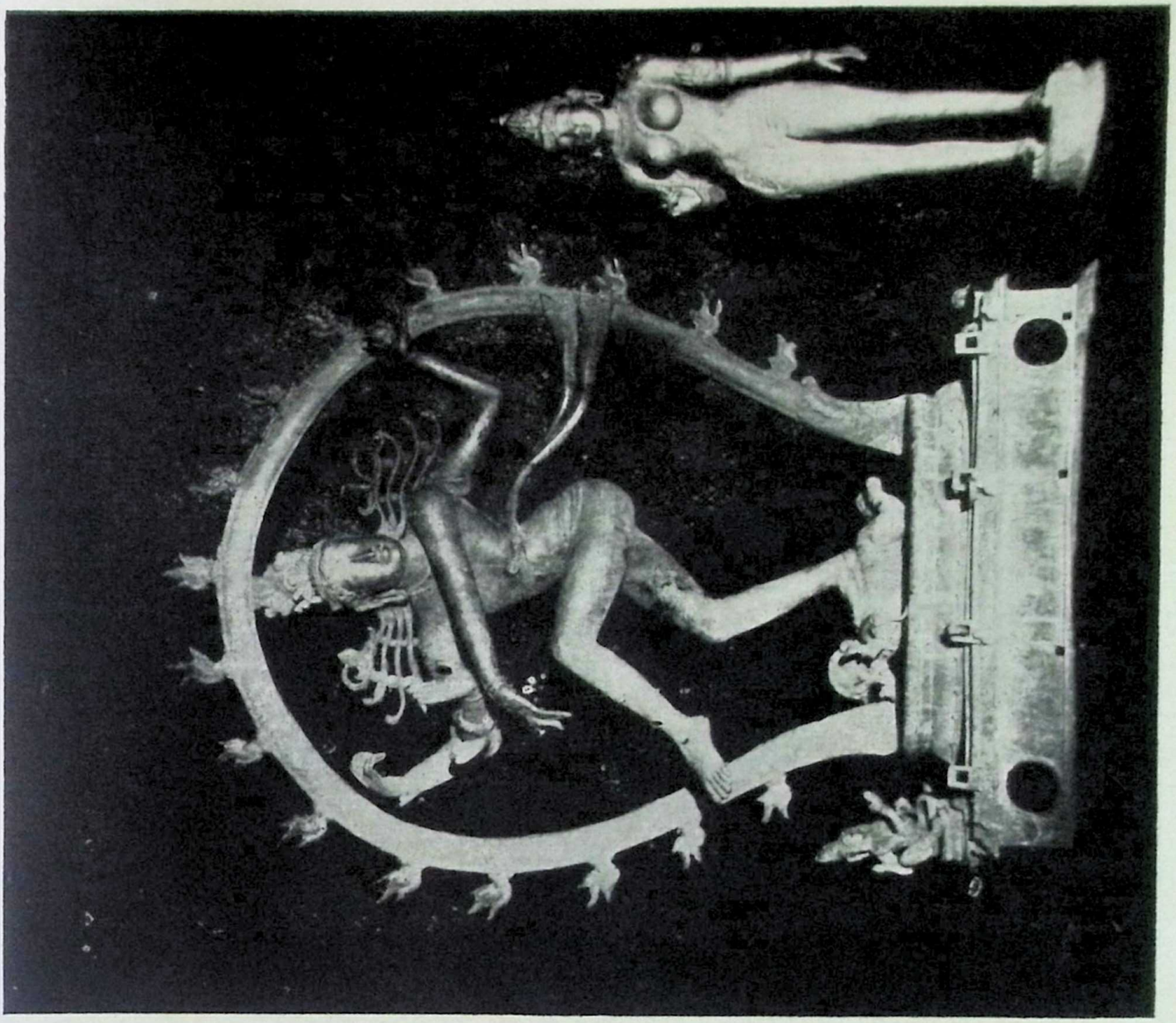

Fig. 169

Fig. 168

PLATE CIX.

Fig. 169 A. Head of Naṭeśa of Fig. 169.

Fig. 169 B. Legs of Naṭeśa of Fig. 169.

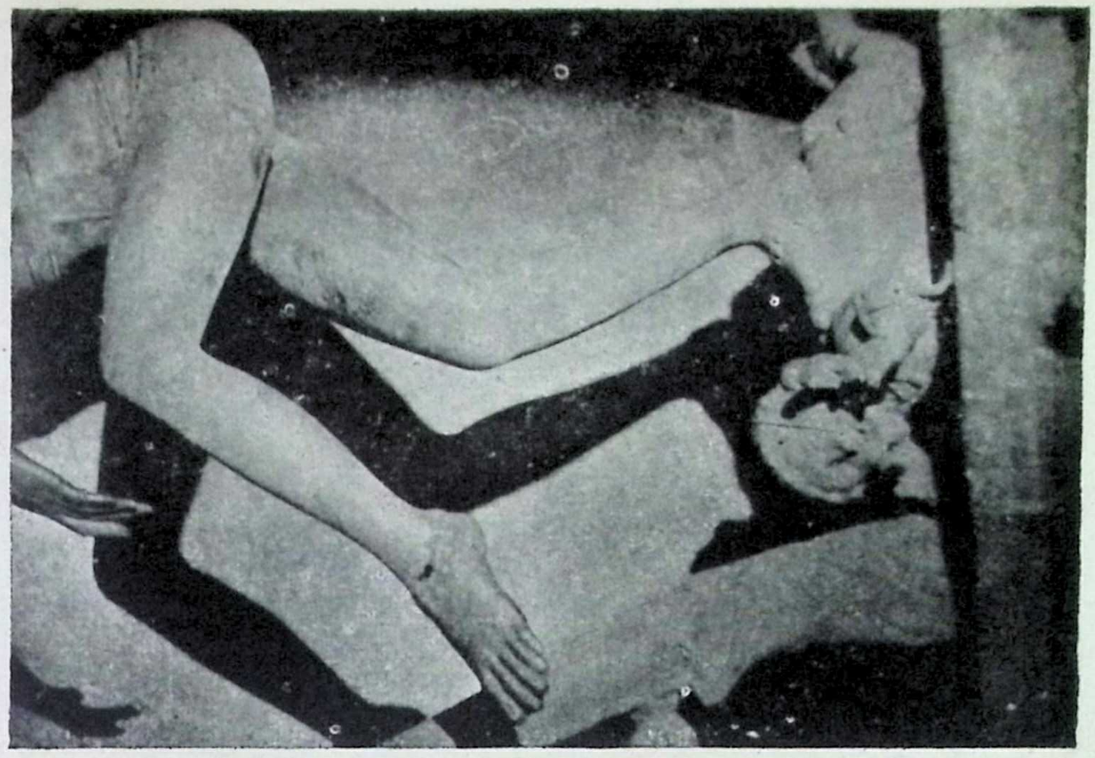

Fig. 169 B

Fig. 169 A

PLATE CX.

Fig. 170. Gaṇeśa, in the same place as of Fig. 169; date same as of Fig. 169.

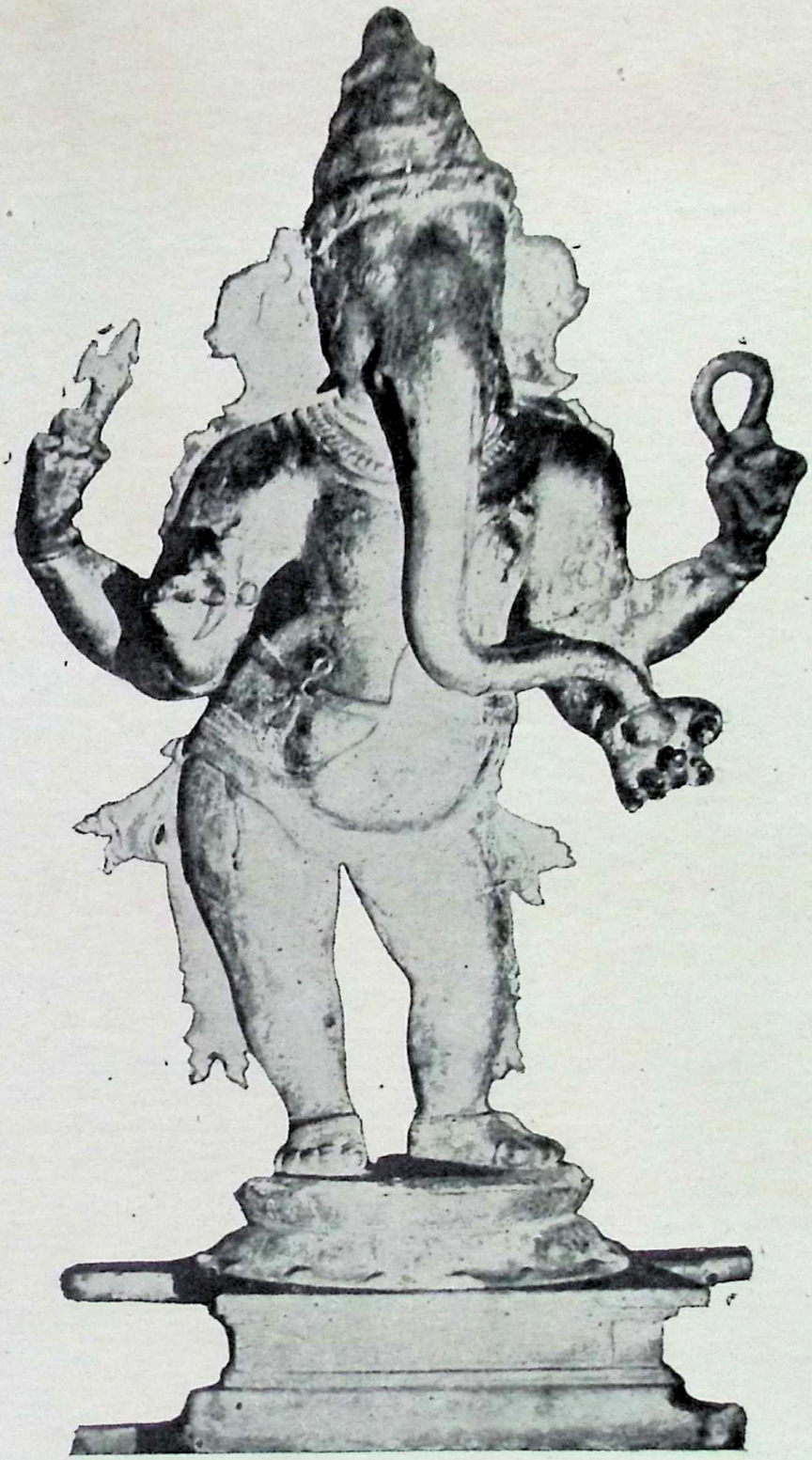

Fig. 170

PLATE CXI.

Fig. 171. Rāma, Vaḷarpuram, North Arcot District; in the Sundara-pperumāḷ temple there; about the end of Rājendra I's reign.

Fig. 172. Rear view of above.

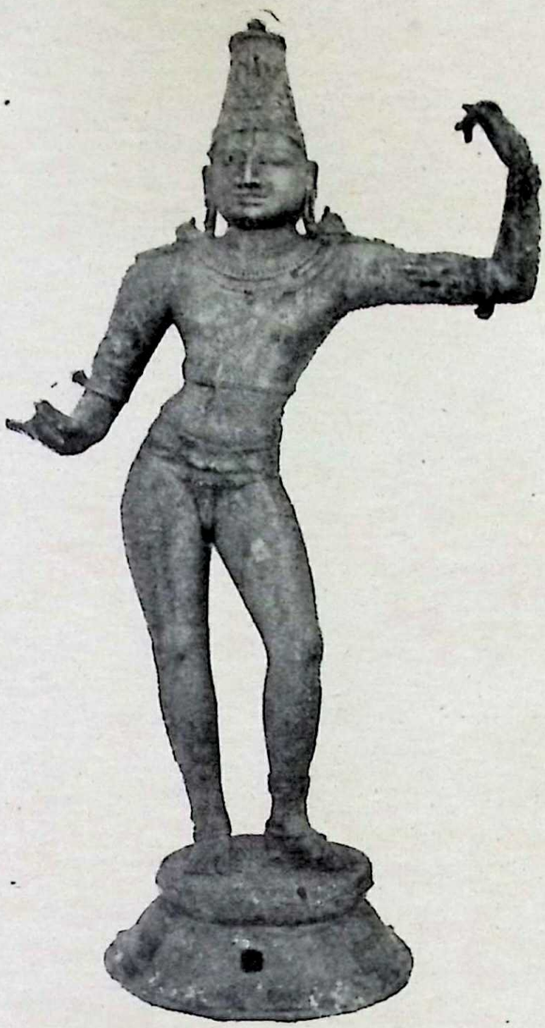

Fig. 171

Fig. 172

PLATE CXII.

Fig. 173. Rājamannār, in the same place as of Fig. 171 ; date same as of Fig. 171.

Fig. 174. Rear view of above.

Fig. 173

Fig. 174

PLATE CXIII.

Fig. 175. Bhikshāṭana, Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District ; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery ; about 1048 A.D.

Fig. 175

PLATE CXIV.

Fig. 176. Rear view of Fig. 175.

Fig. 177. Vishṇu, Paruttiyūr, Tanjore District ; in the Rāma temple there ; date about the same as of Fig. 175.

Fig. 178. Narasiṅgamuniyadaraiyar (? Rāma), Tirunāmanallūr, South Arcot District ; in the temple there ; date same as of Fig. 177.

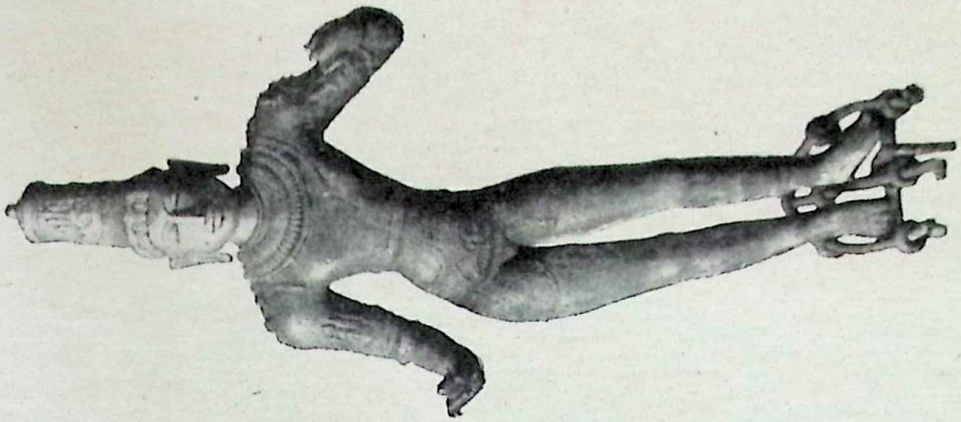

Fig. 178

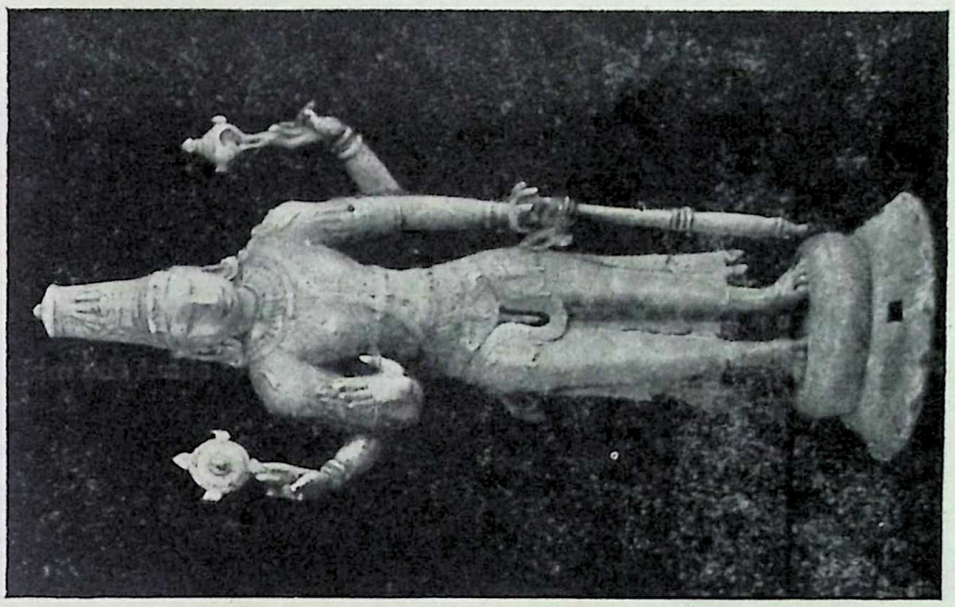

Fig. 177

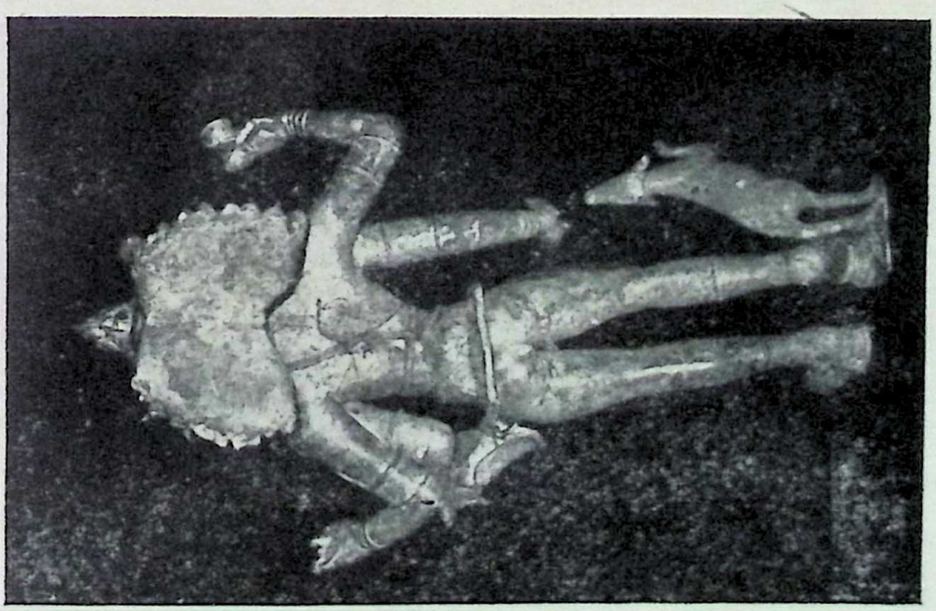

Fig. 176

PLATE CXV.

Fig. 179. Buddha, seated, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; about the middle of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 179

PLATE CXVI.

Fig. 180. Kaṇṇappanāyanār, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu, Chittoor District; date same as of Fig. 179.

Fig. 180

PLATE CXVII.

Fig. 181. Rear view of Fig. 180.

Fig. 182. Chaṇḍikeśvara, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; about the beginning of the third quarter of the 11th century A.D.

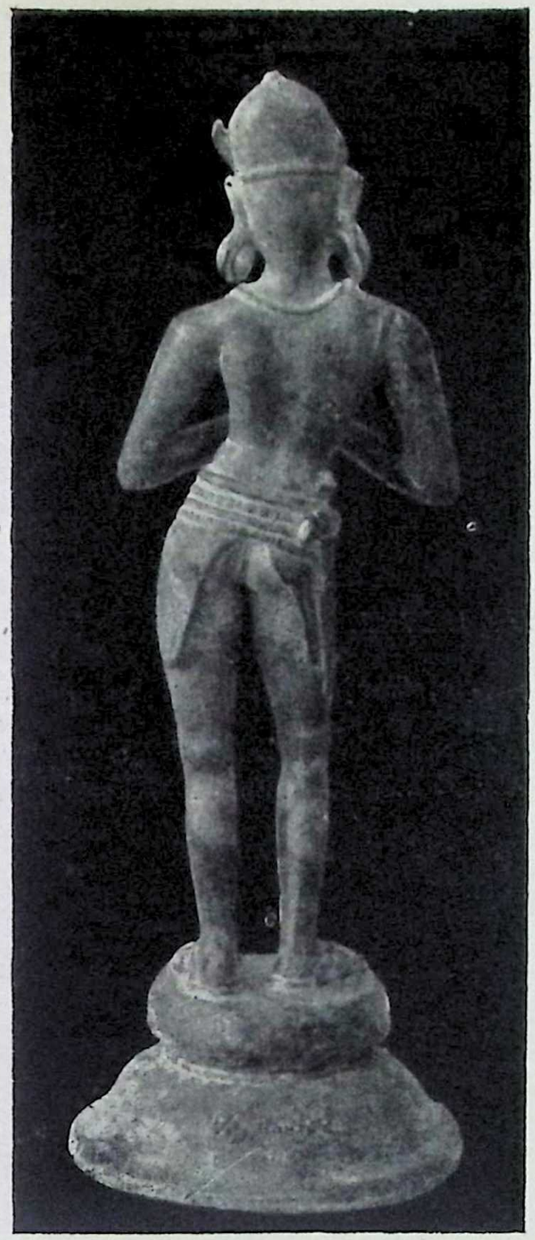

Fig. 181

Fig. 182

PLATE CXVIII.

Fig. 183. Tripurāntaka group, Iḍumbāvaṇam, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 182.

Fig. 184. Vishṇu and Bhūdevī; in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai; date same as of Fig. 183.

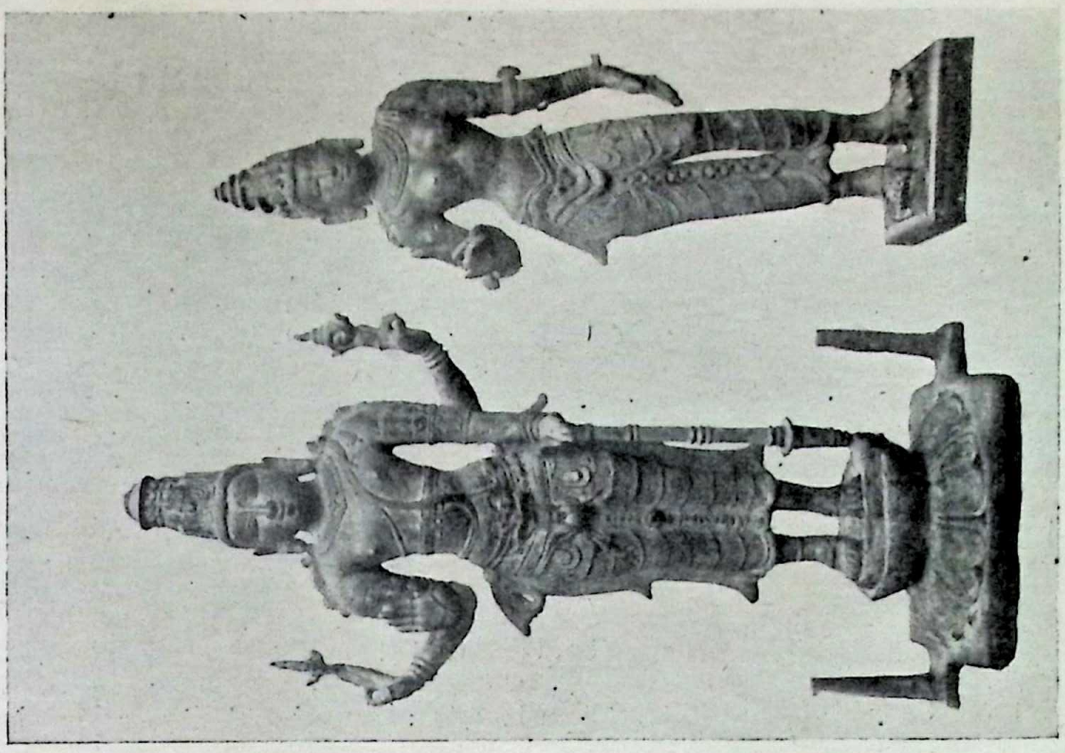

Fig. 184

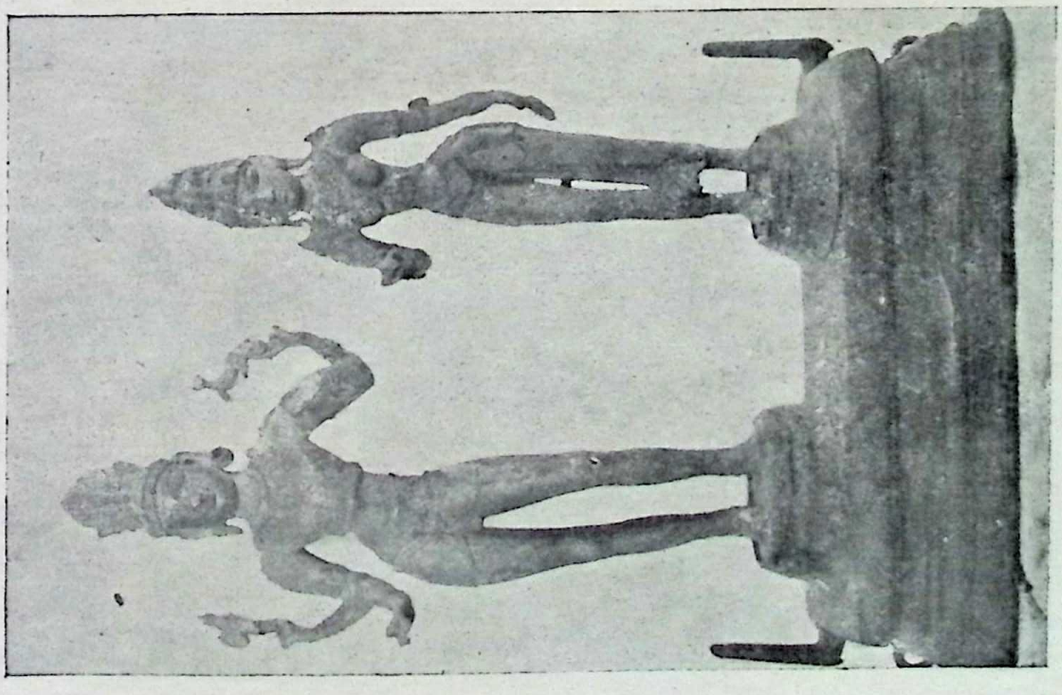

Fig. 183

PLATE CXIX.

Fig. 185. Chaṇḍikeśvara, Belūr, Salem District; about the third quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 186. King, Kandarakoṭṭai, South Arcot District; about the seventh decade of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 185

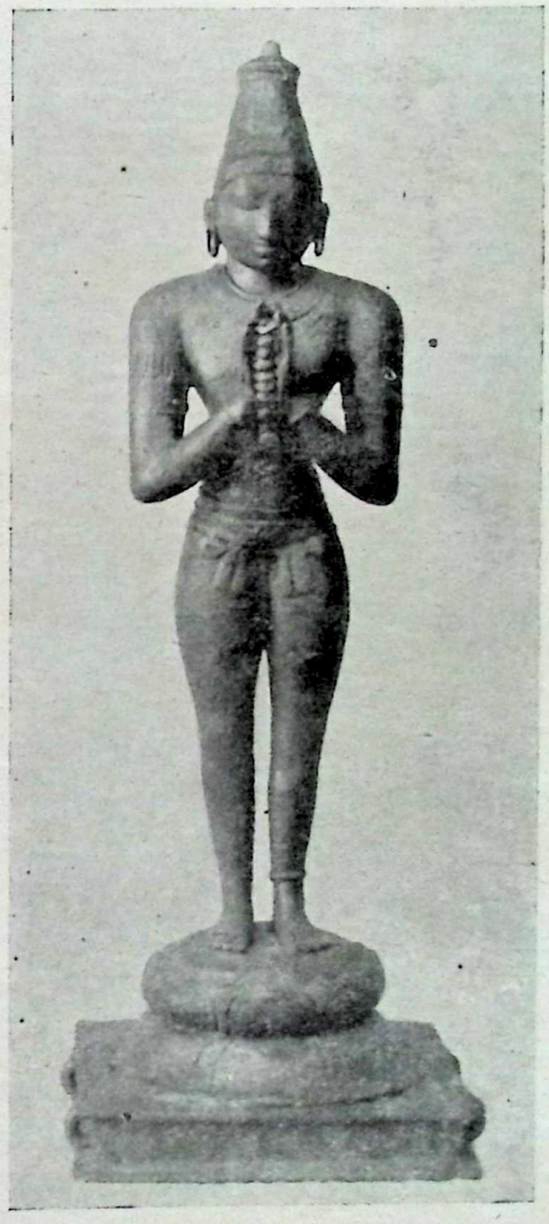

Fig. 186

PLATE CXX.

Fig. 187. Mahishāsura-mardanī (?), Turaikkāḍu, Tanjore District; middle or the end of the third quarter of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 188. Kalyāṇasundara, Tiruvottiyūr, near Madras, Chingleput District; in the Śiva temple there; about the end of the school of Rājendra I.

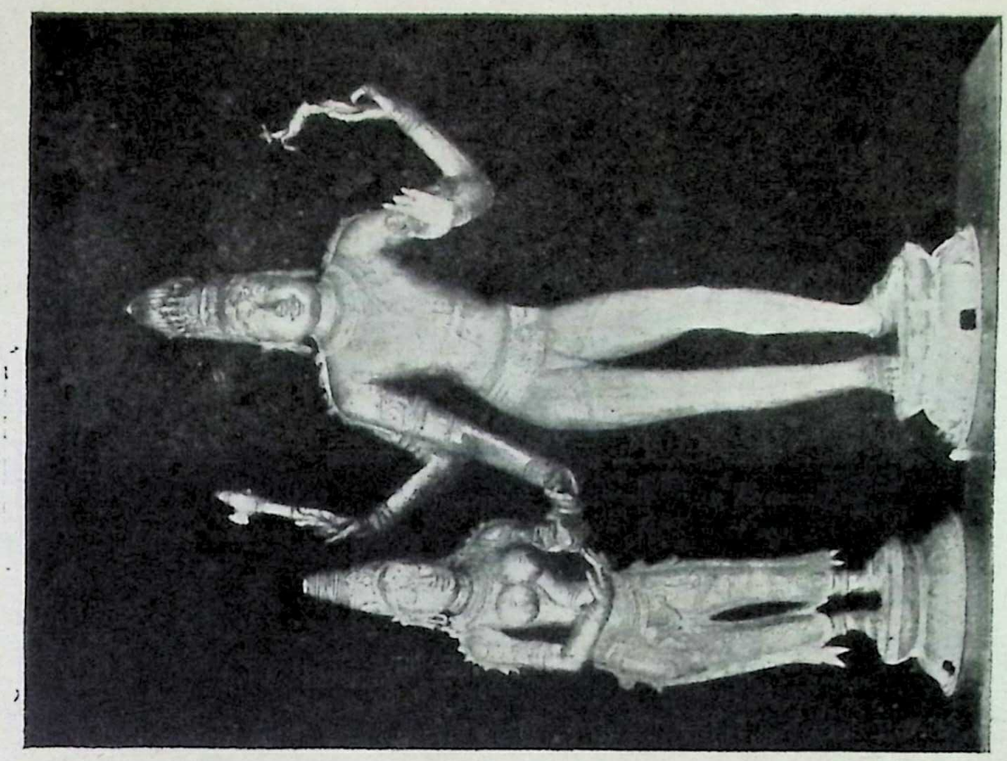

Fig. 188

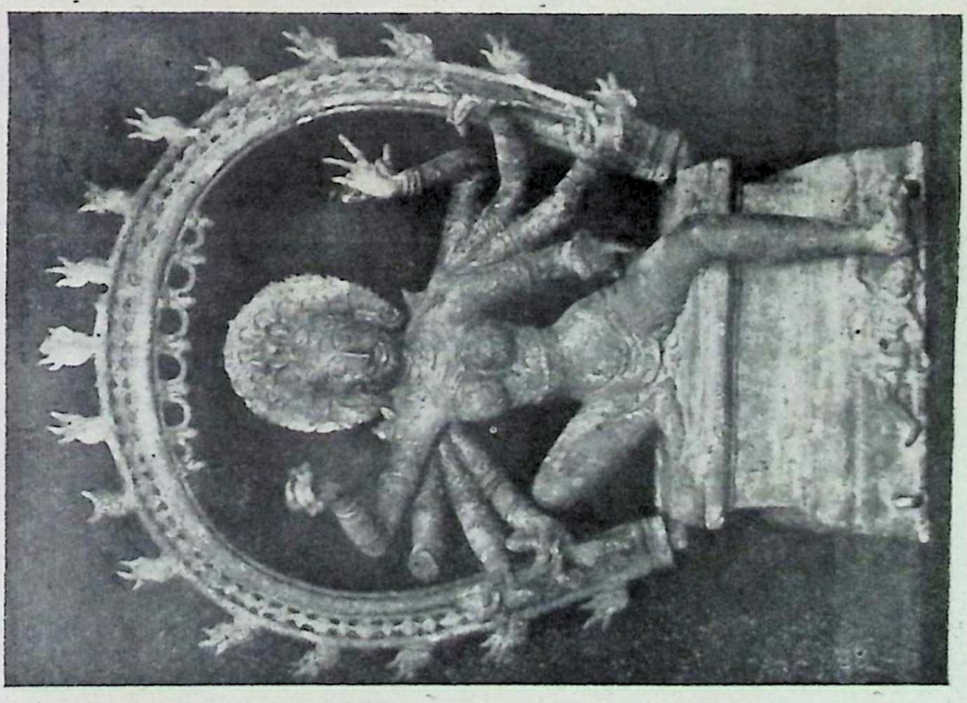

Fig. 187

PLATE CXXI.

Fig. 189. Somāskanda, Nīḍūr, Tanjore District; about the last quarter of the 11th century A.D.

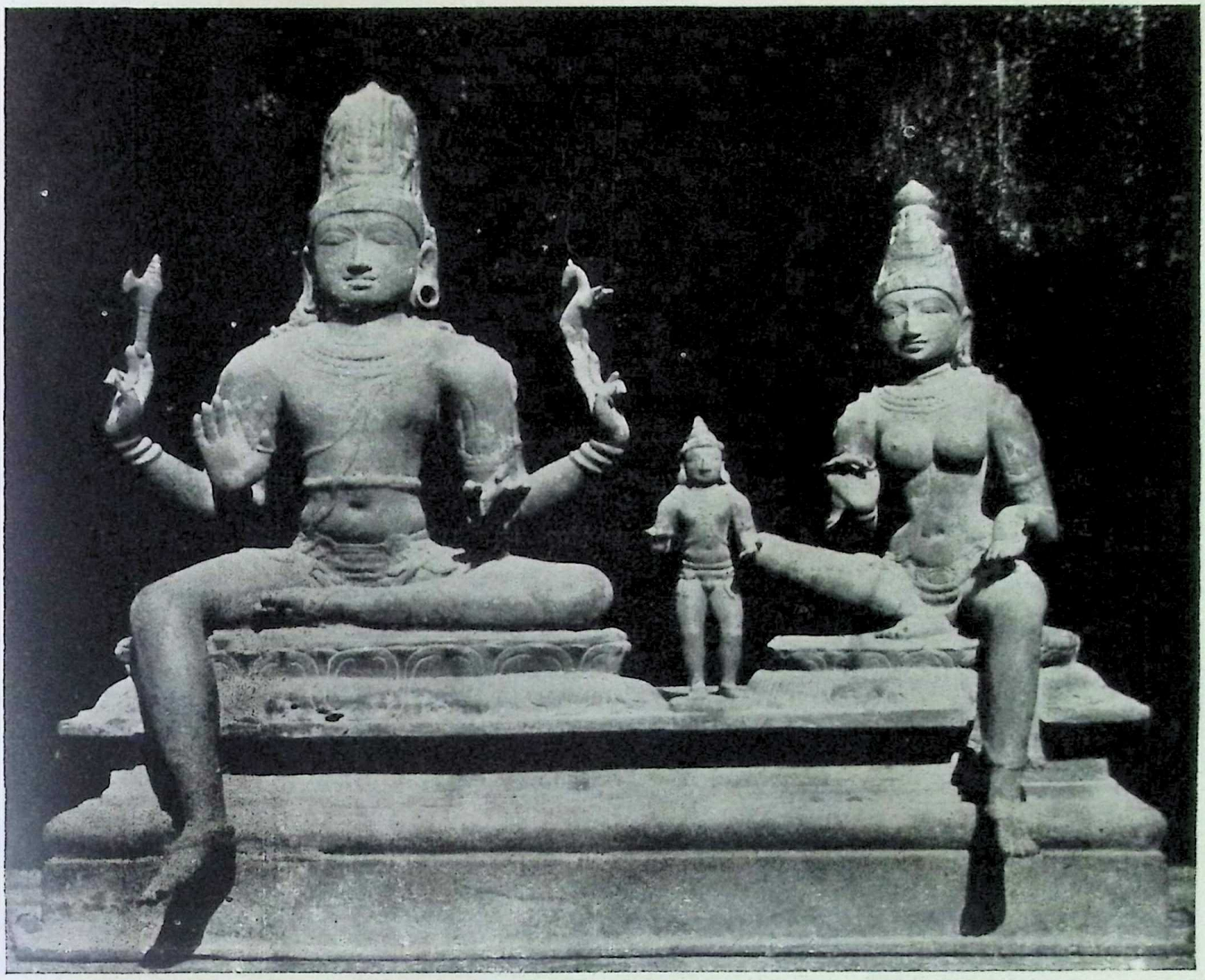

Fig. 189

PLATE CXXII.

Fig. 190. Jambhala, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 189.

Fig. 191. Avalokiteśvara, from the same place as above; about the closing years of the 11th century A.D.

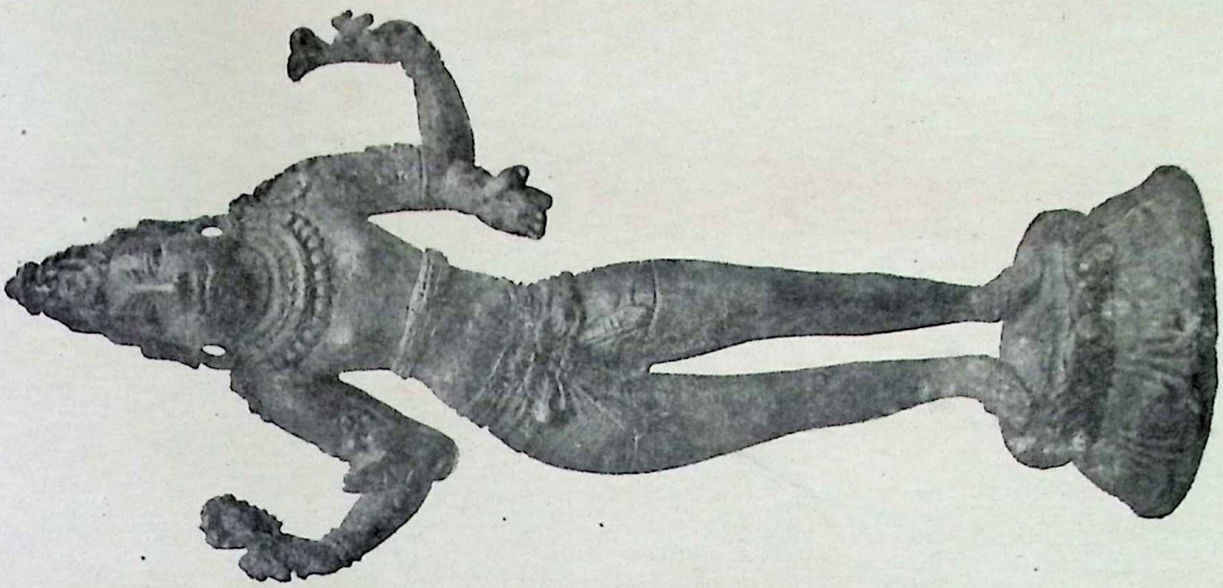

Fig. 191

Fig. 190

PLATE CXXIII.

Fig. 192. Chandraśekhara, Okkūr, Tanjore District; about the last few years of the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 193. Pārvatī, from the same place as above; about the beginning of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 192

Fig. 193

PLATE CXXIV.

Fig. 194. Goddess (?Bhūdevi), locality not known; now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London; about the beginning of the 12th century A.D.

Fig 195. Śivakāmasundarī, Tiruvāymūr, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; date slightly later than the above.

Fig. 196. Naṭeśa, Tiruppanandāḷ, Tanjore District: now in the Tanjore Art Gallery: about the first quarter of the 12th century A.D.

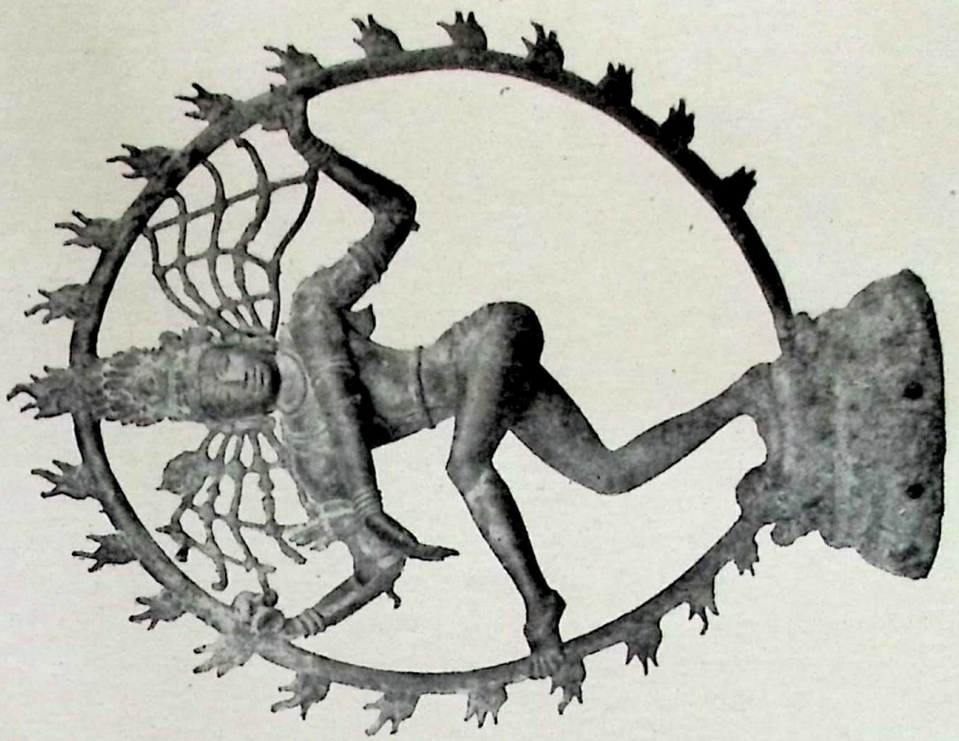

Fig. 196

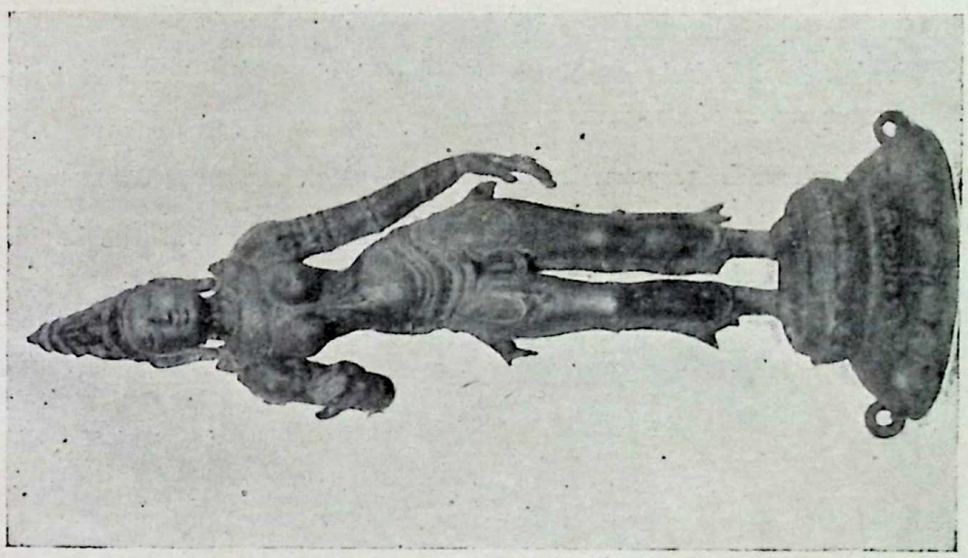

Fig. 195

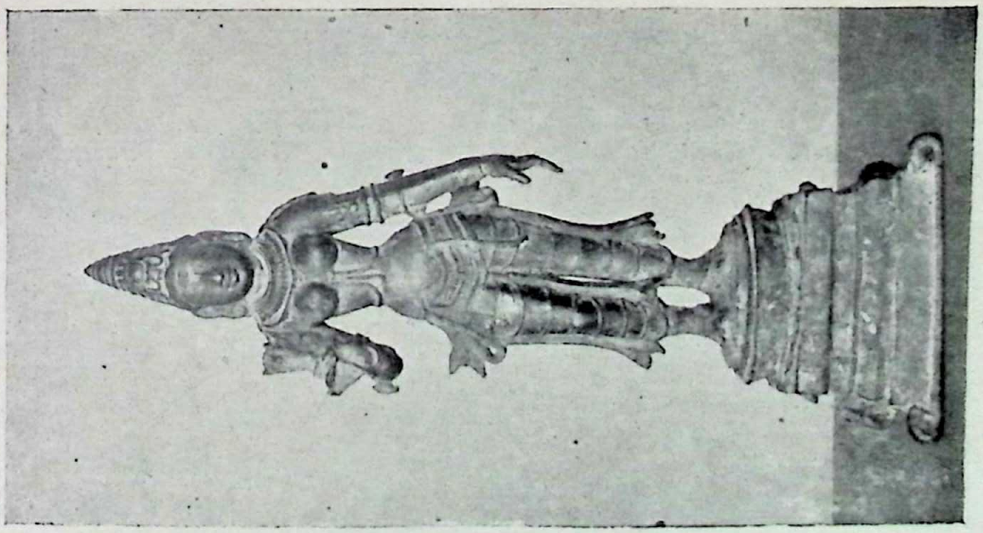

Fig. 194

PLATE CXXV.

Fig. 197. Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District: about the end of the first quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 198. Shaḍakshari Lokeśvara, from the same place as above; date same as above.

Fig. 199. Avalokiteśvara, from the same place as above; about the beginning of the second quarter of the 12th century A. D.

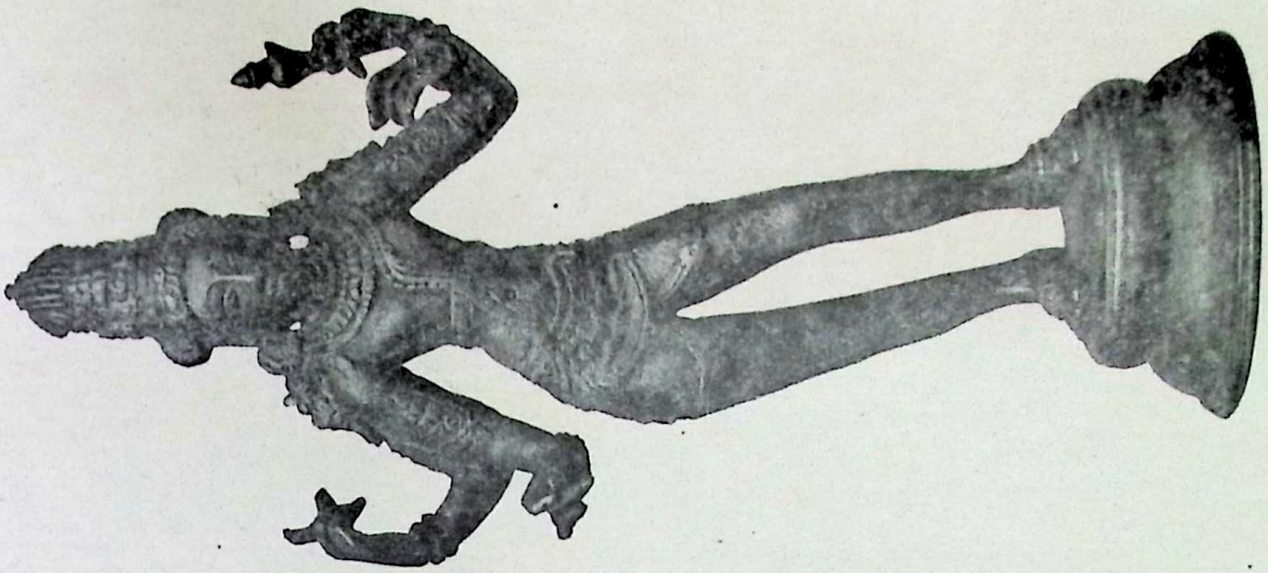

Fig. 199

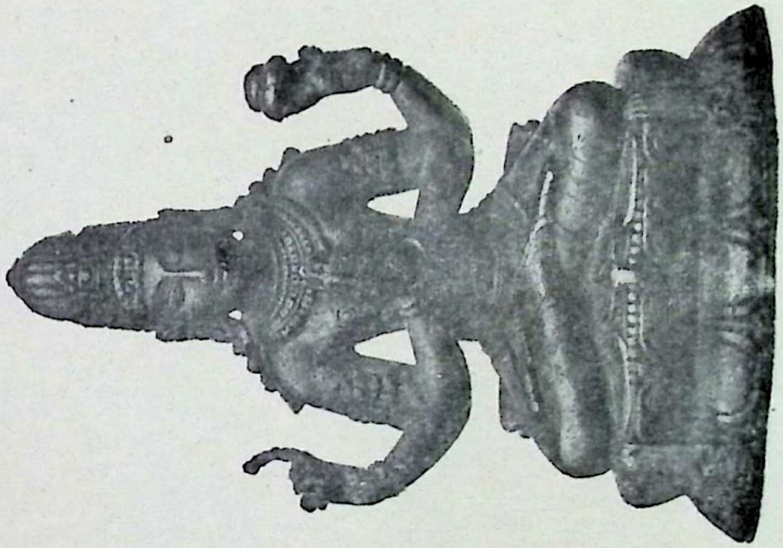

Fig. 198

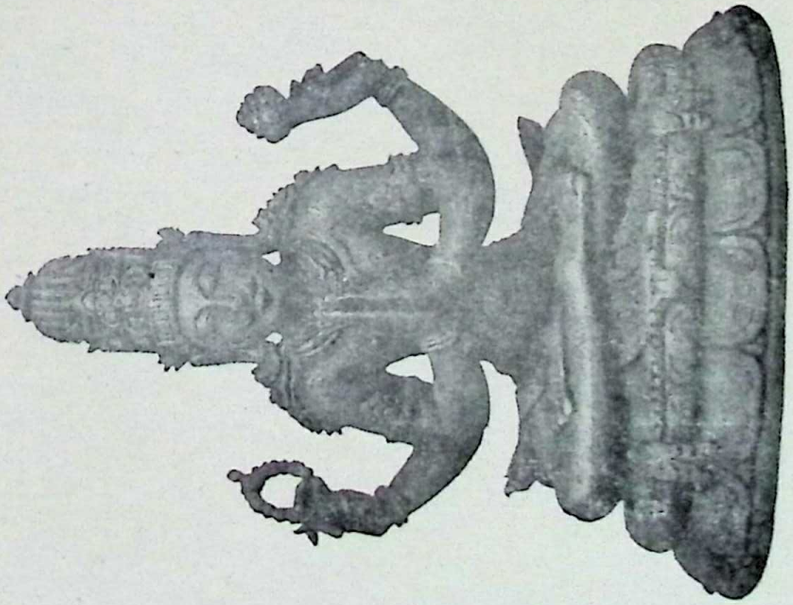

Fig. 197

PLATE CXXVI.

Fig. 200. Tārā, from the same place as of Fig. 199; date same as of Fig. 199.

Fig. 201. Maitreya, from the same place as above; about the second quarter of the 12th century A. D.

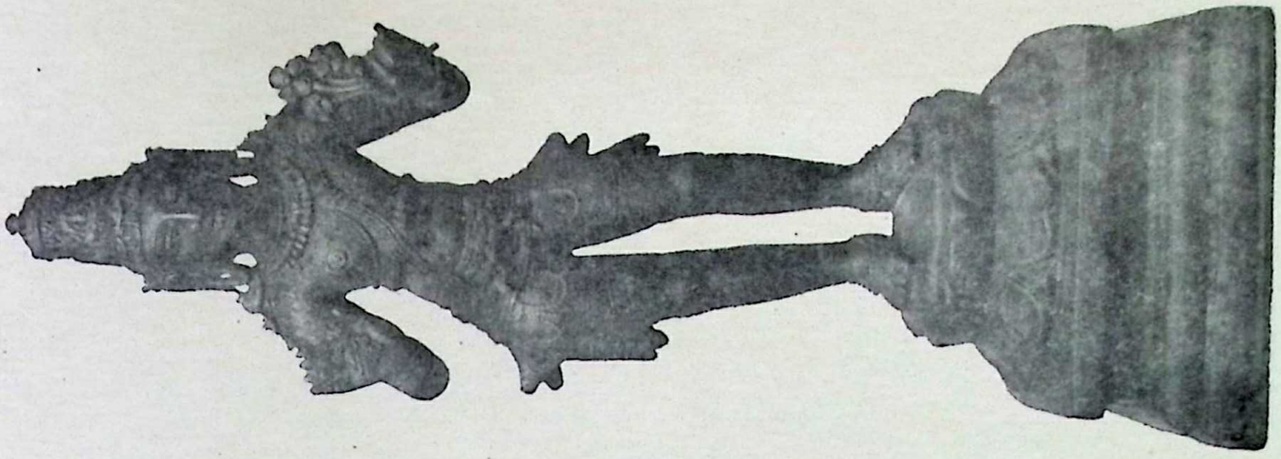

Fig. 201

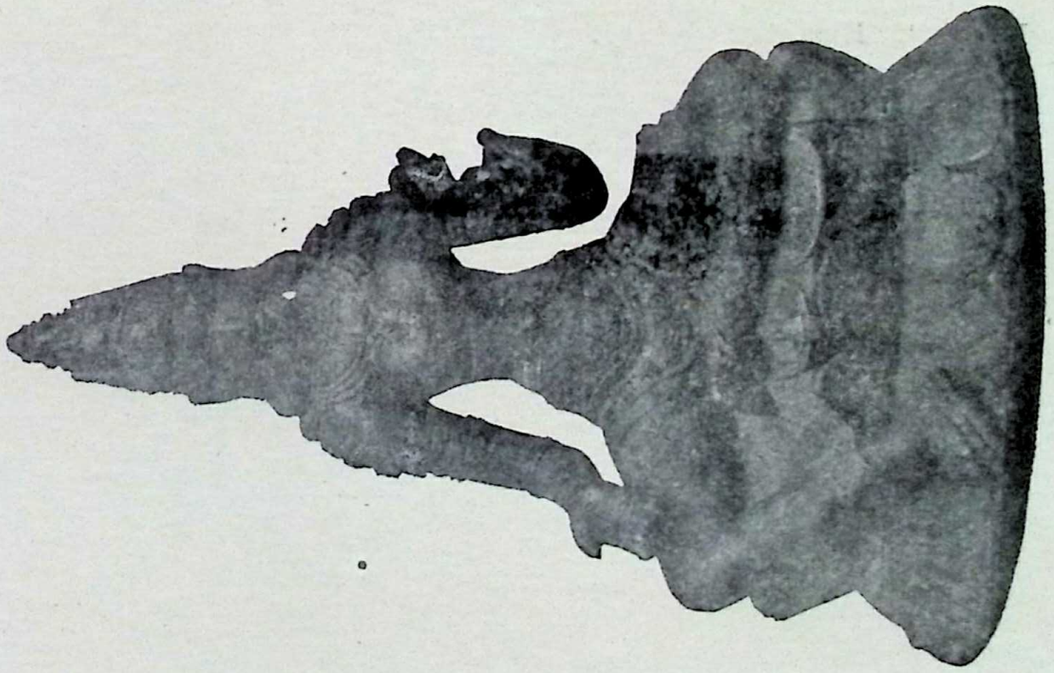

Fig. 200

PLATE CXXVII.

Fig. 202. Sītā, locality not known; now in a private collection: about the end of the third decade of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 203. Rear view of above.

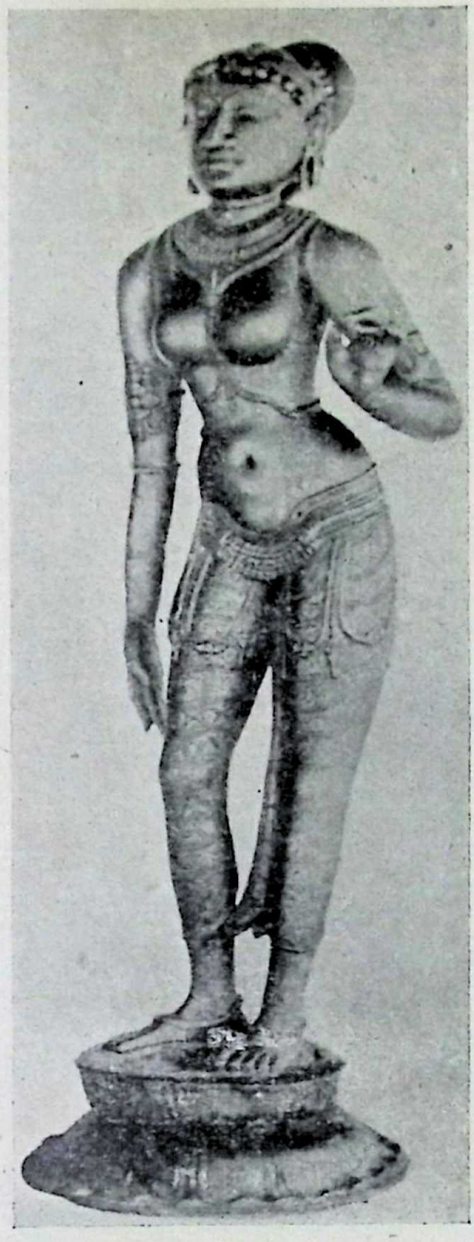

Fig. 202

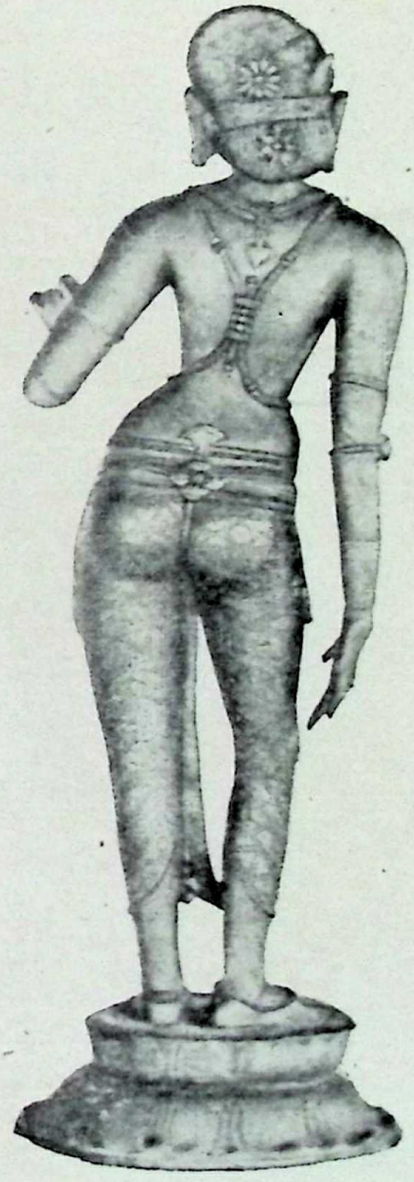

Fig. 203

PLATE CXXVIII.

Fig. 204. Rishipatnī, locality not known; now in a private collection; about the middle of the second quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 205. Rear view of above.

Fig. 204

Fig. 205

PLATE CXXIX.

Fig. 206. Chola King, locality not known; now in a private collection; about the second quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 207. Chaṇḍikeśvara, from Tanjore District; about the fourth decade of the 12th century A.D.

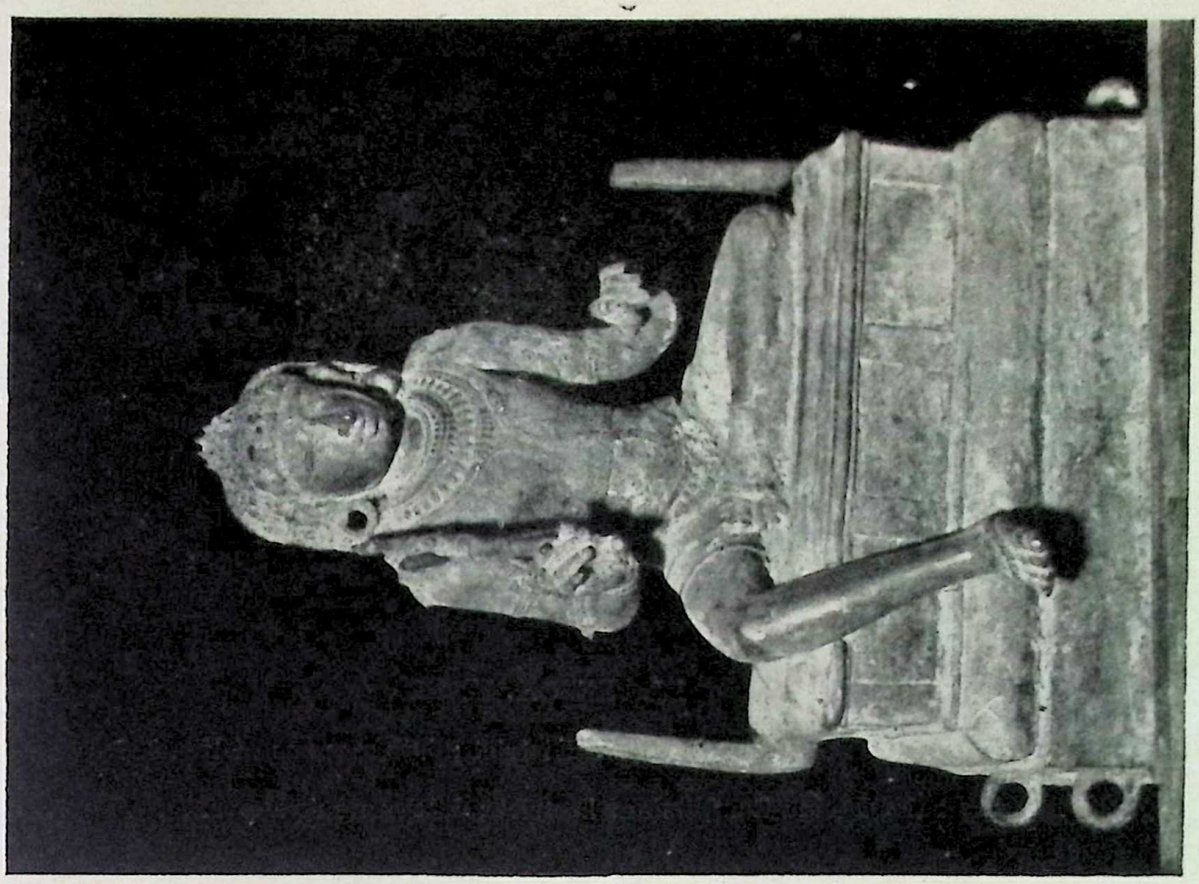

Fig. 207

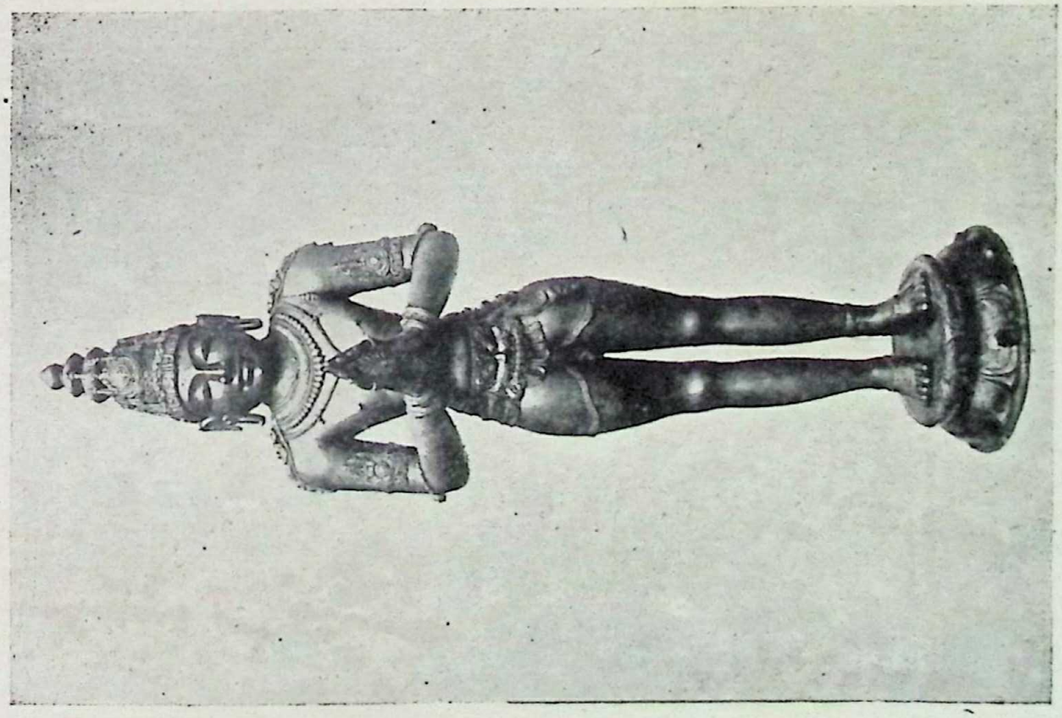

Fig. 206

PLATE CXXX.

Fig. 208. Umāsahita , Seṭṭipulam, Tanjore District ; date same as of Fig. 207.

Fig. 209. Vīṇādhara, Pudūr East, Salem District ; date same as above.

Fig. 208

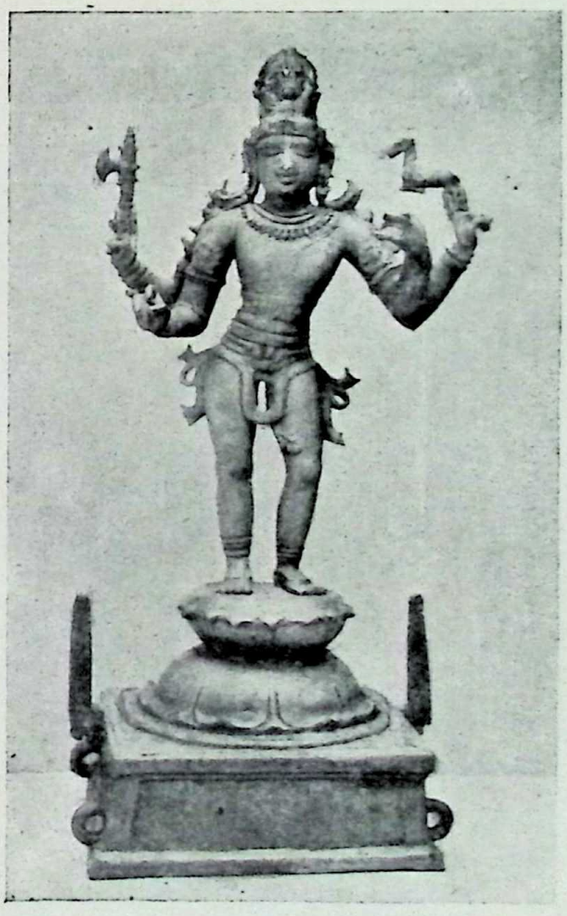

Fig. 209

PLATE CXXXI.

Fig. 210. Chaṇḍikeśvara, locality not known; now belonging to the Eton College, England; about the second quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 211. Sūrya, Hariśchandrapuram, Tanjore District; date same as above.

Fig. 210

Fig. 211

PLATE CXXXII.

Fig. 212. Chandraśekhara, locality not known; now in the Musee Guimet, Paris; date same as of Fig. 209.

Fig. 213. Rear view of above.

Fig. 212

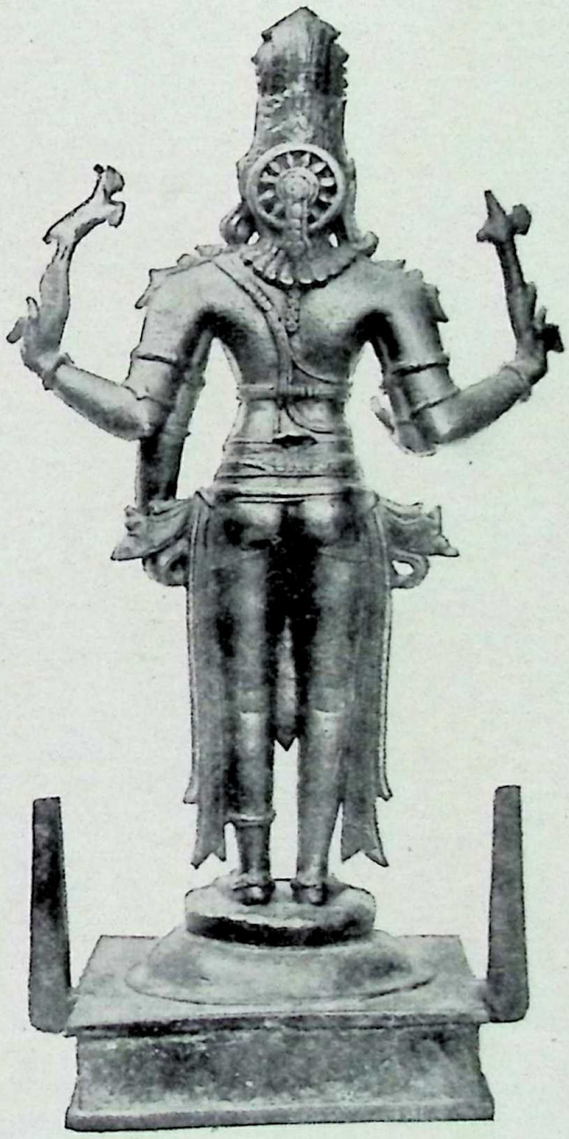

Fig. 213

PLATE CXXXIII.

Fig. 214. Pradoshamūrti, Veḷḷāḷagaram, Tanjore District; about the middle of the second quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 215. Vṛishabhavāhana, Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram, Tiruchirappalli District; date same as above.

Fig. 214

Fig. 215

PLATE CXXXIV.

Fig. 216. Naṭeśa, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu, Chittoor District; now in a private collection; about the middle of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 217. Umāsahita, standing, Peruñjeri, Tanjore District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as above.

Fig. 216

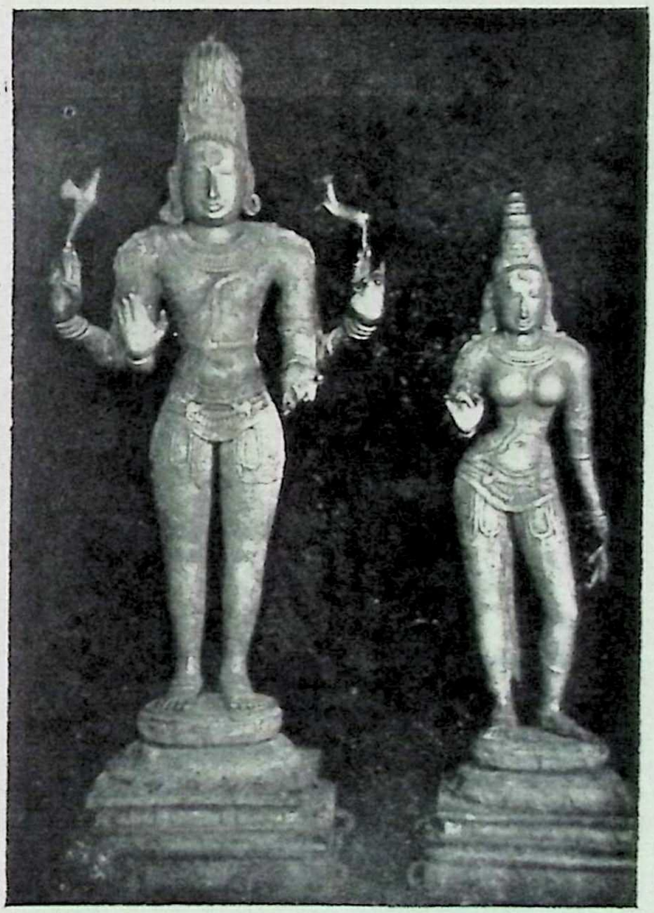

Fig. 217

PLATE CXXXV.

Fig. 218. Naṭeśa, Melappĕruṁpaḷḷam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 217.

Fig. 218

PLATE CXXXVI.

Fig. 219. Śivakāmasundarī, forming a group with the Naṭeśa of Fig. 218; from the same place as of Fig. 218.

Fig. 219

PLATE CXXXVII.

Fig. 220. Somāskanda, Veḷḷūr Siruvarai, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 218.

Fig. 221. Pārvatī, from the same place as above; date same as above.

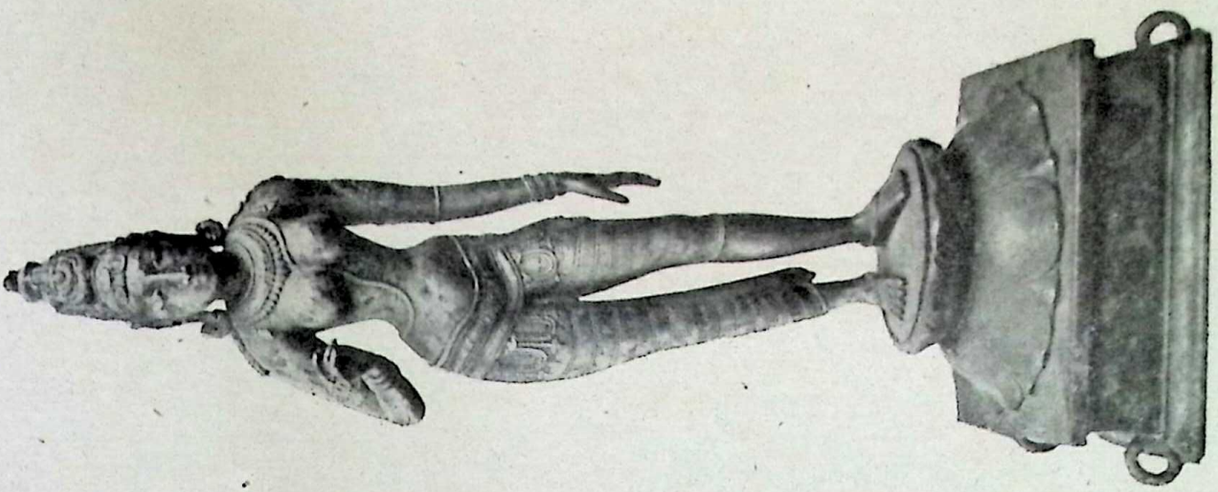

Fig. 221

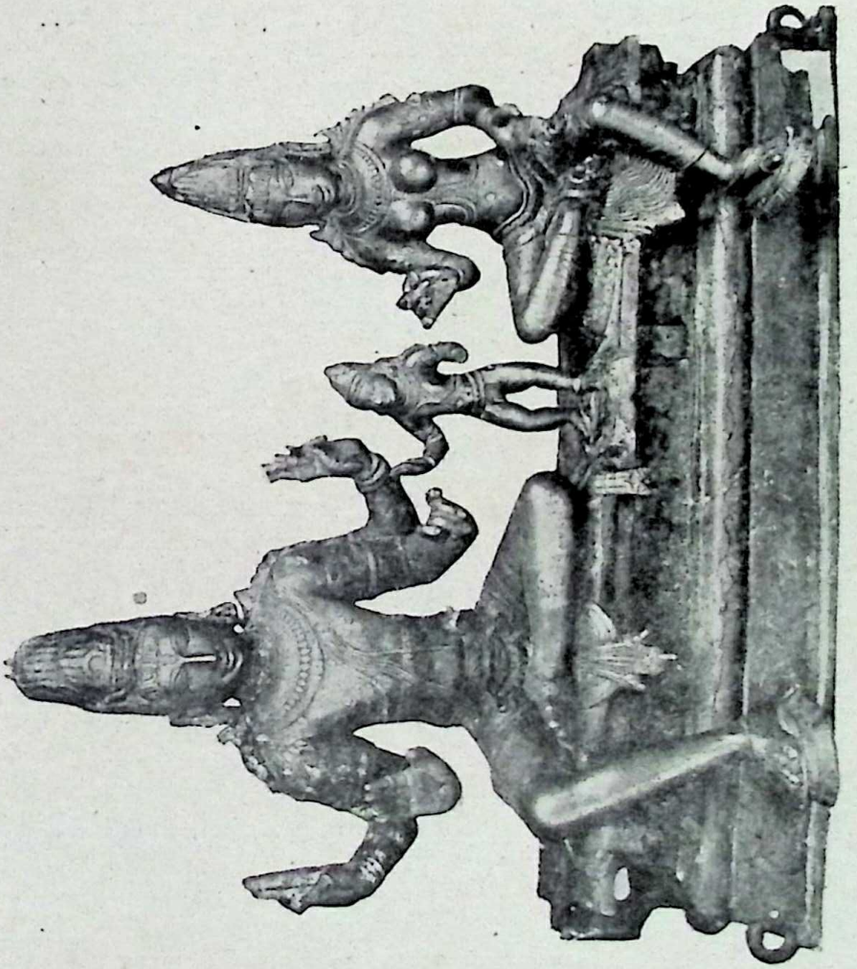

Fig. 220

PLATE CXXXVIII.

Fig. 222. Sundaramūrti, Koḍumuḍi, Coimbatore District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 221.

Fig. 223. Rear view of above.

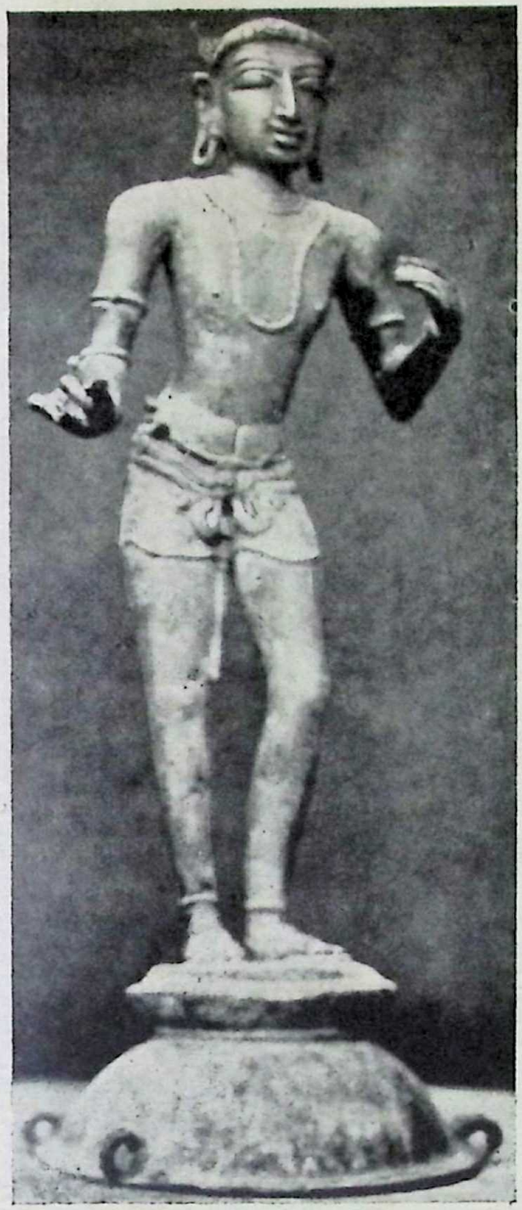

Fig. 222

Fig. 223

PLATE CXXXIX.

Fig. 224 Naṭeśa, locality not known; now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London; about the beginning of the third quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 224

PLATE CXL.

Fig. 225. Rāma, Maṇakkāl, Tanjore Distrist ; date same as of Fig. 224.

Fig. 225

PLATE CXLI.

Fig. 226. Rear view of Rāma and Sītā of Figs. 225 and 227.

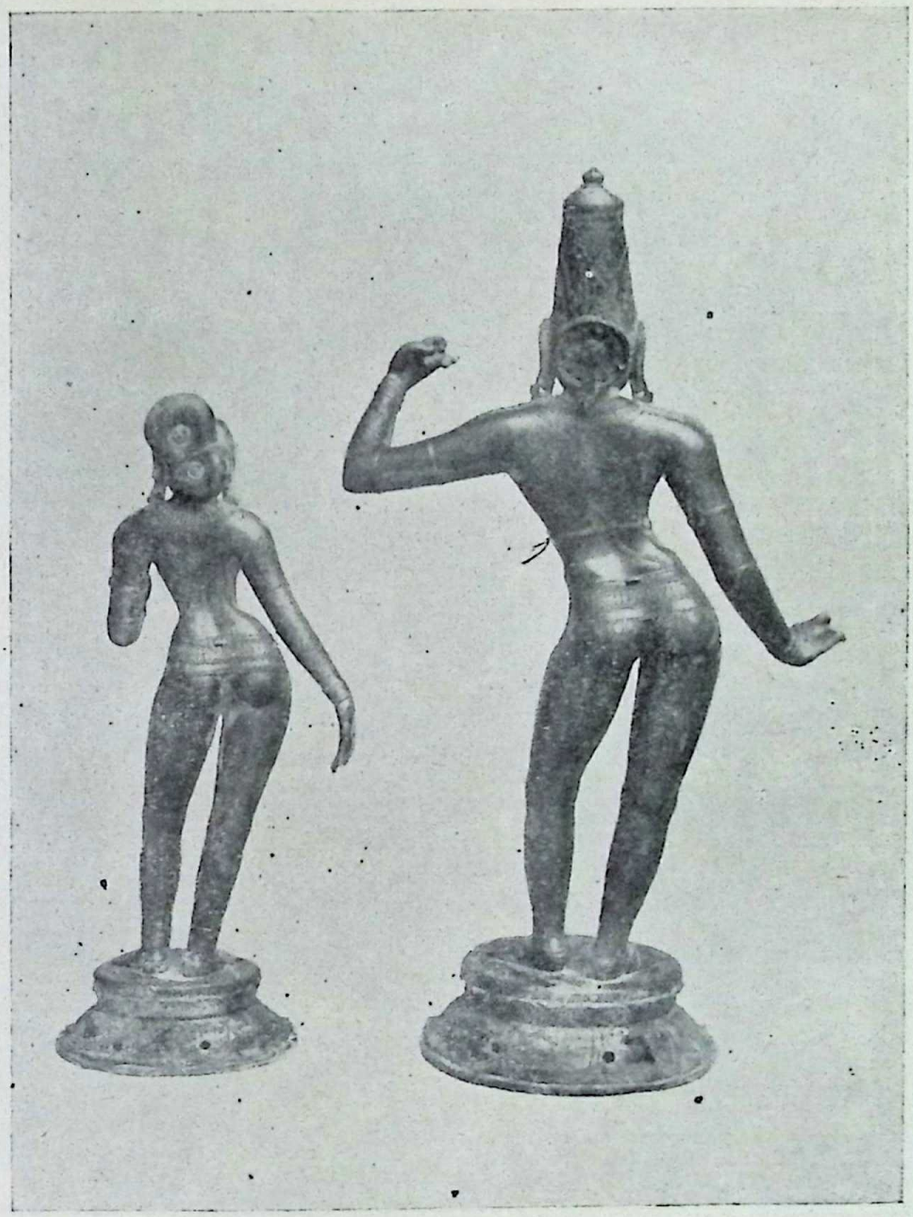

Fig. 226

PLATE CXLII.

Fig. 227. Sītā, forming a group with the Rāma of Fig. 225.

Fig. 228. Pārvatī, Śivapuram, Tanjore District; date same as above.

Fig. 227

Fig. 228

PLATE CXLIII.

Fig. 229. Somāskanda, Vaittīśvaran-kovil, Tanjore District; about the last quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 230. Rear view of above.

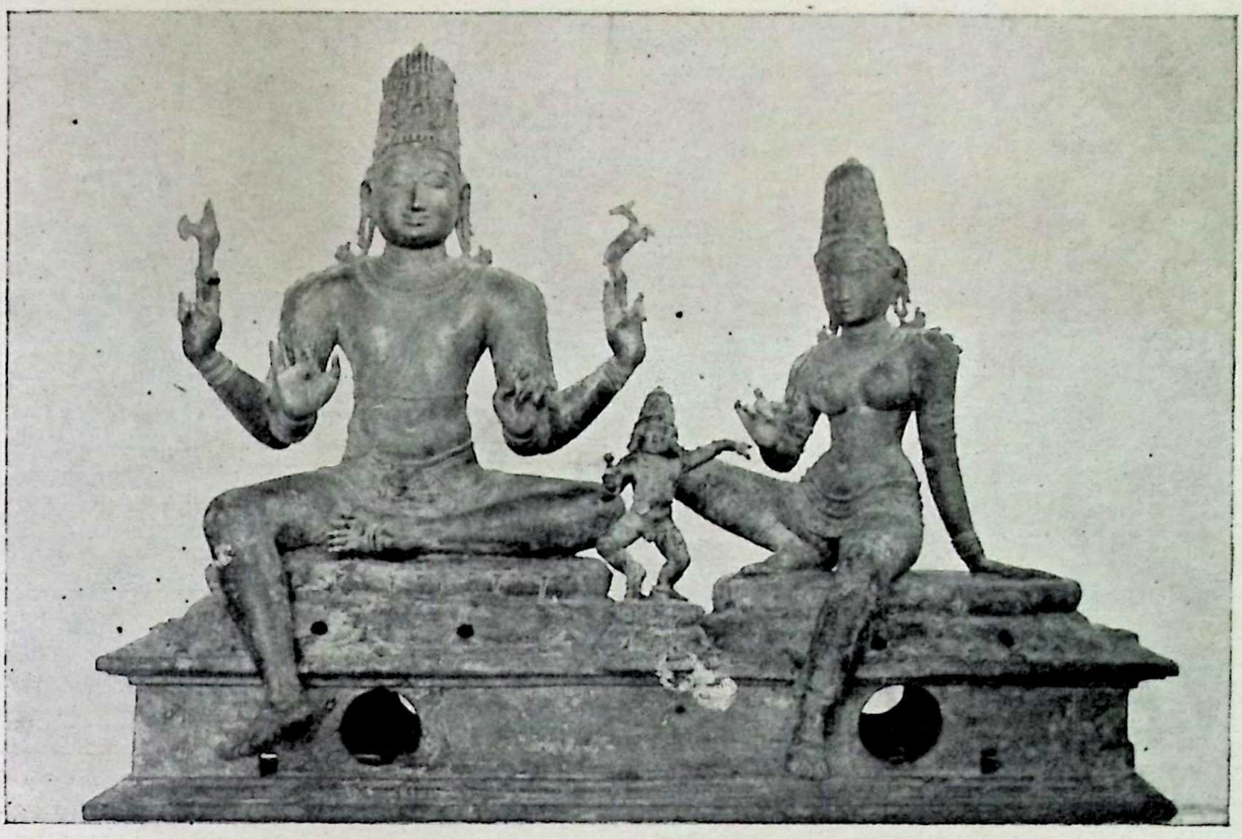

Fig. 229

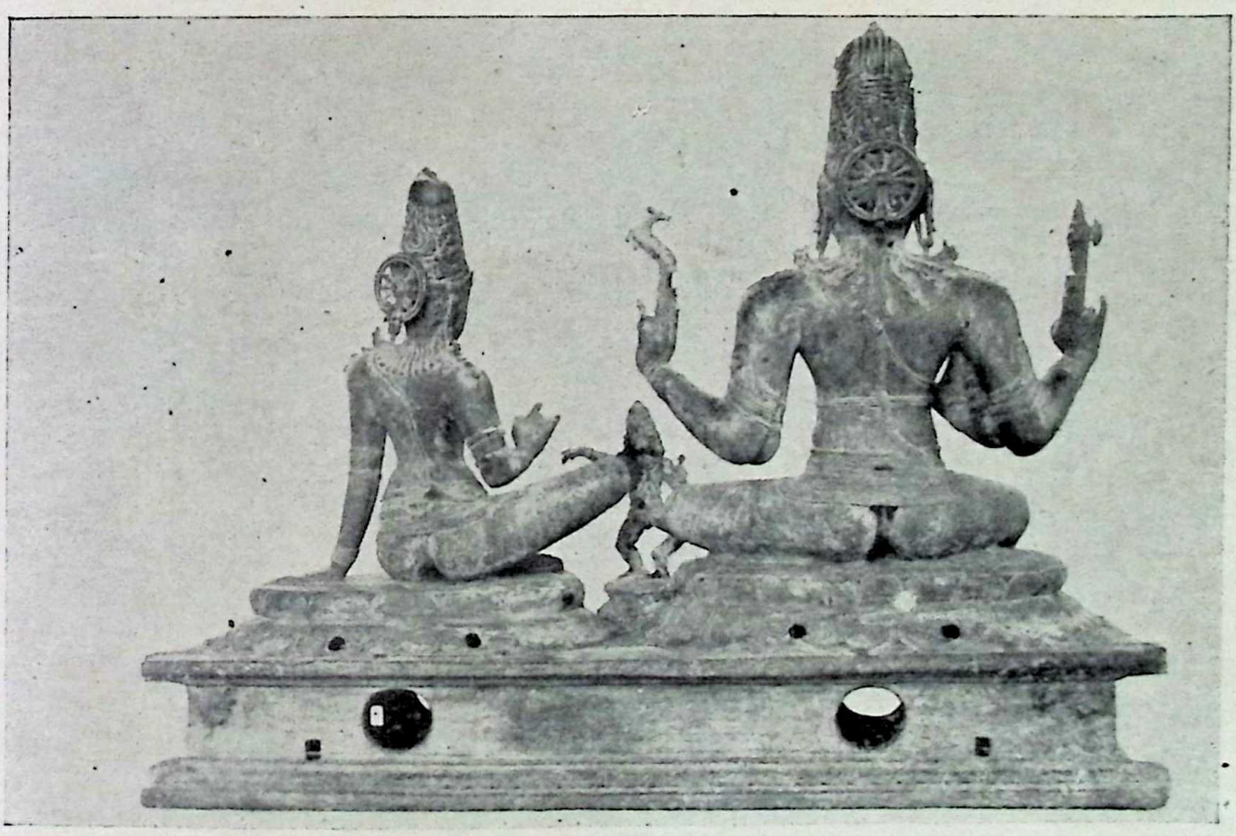

Fig. 230

PLATE CXLIV.

Fig. 231. Vināḍhara, Vadaraṅgam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 229.

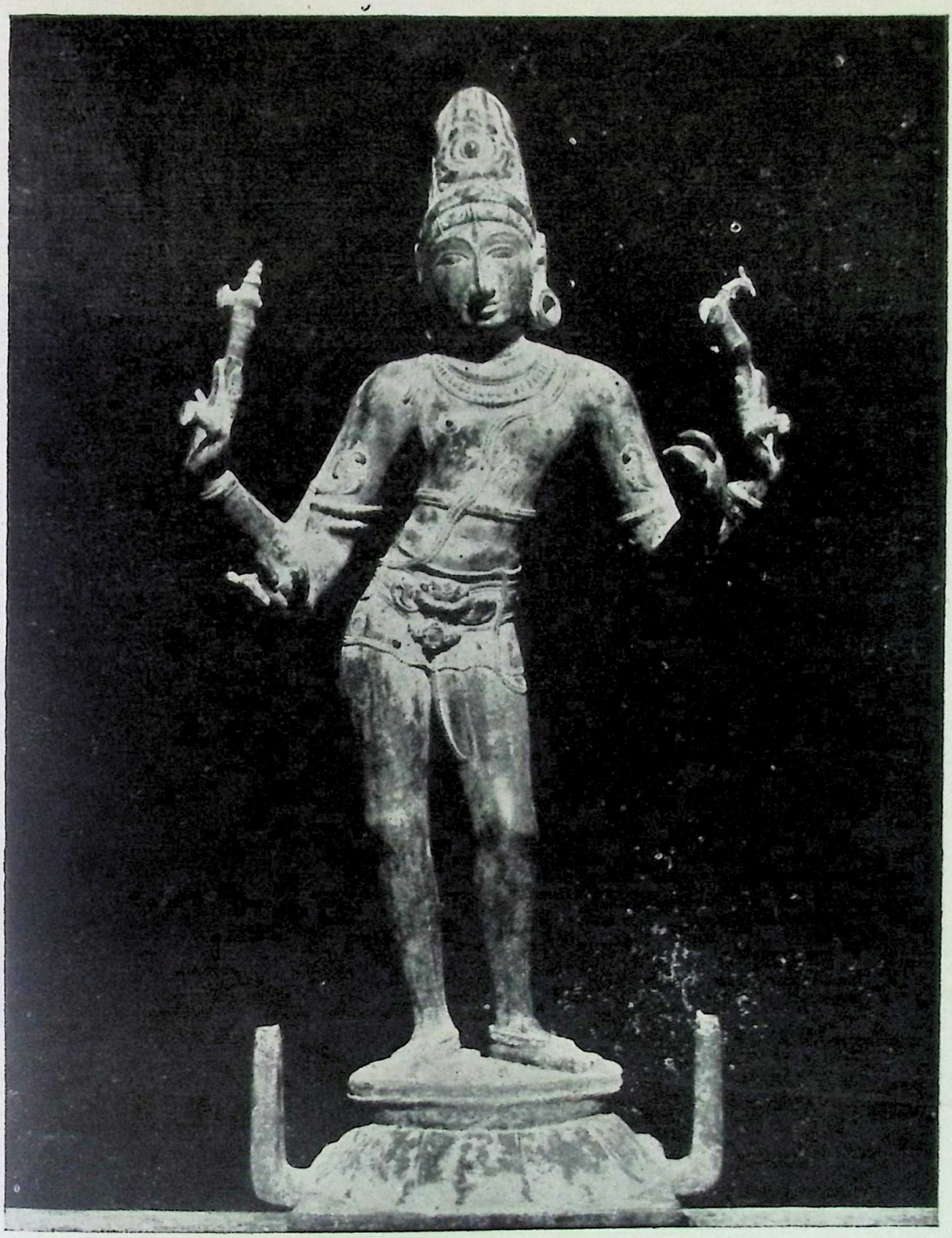

Fig. 231

PLATE CXLV.

Fig. 232. Trident with Pradoshamūrti, from Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 231.

Fig. 233. Nandi, Tiruvānmiyūr, Chingleput District; date same as above.

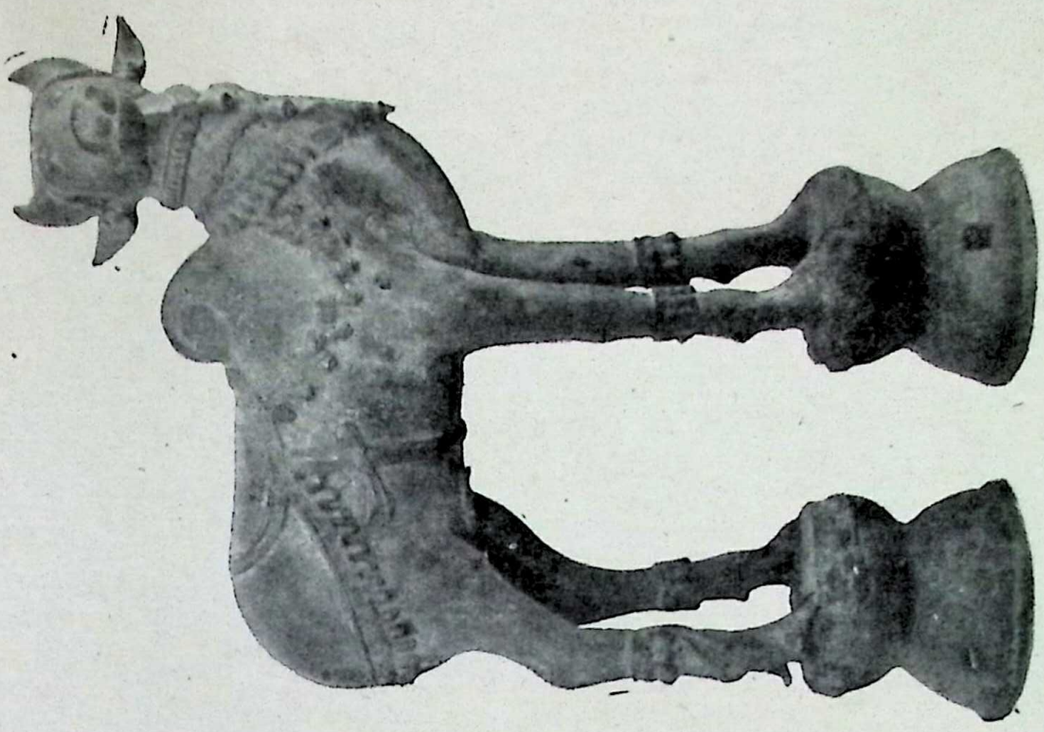

Fig. 293

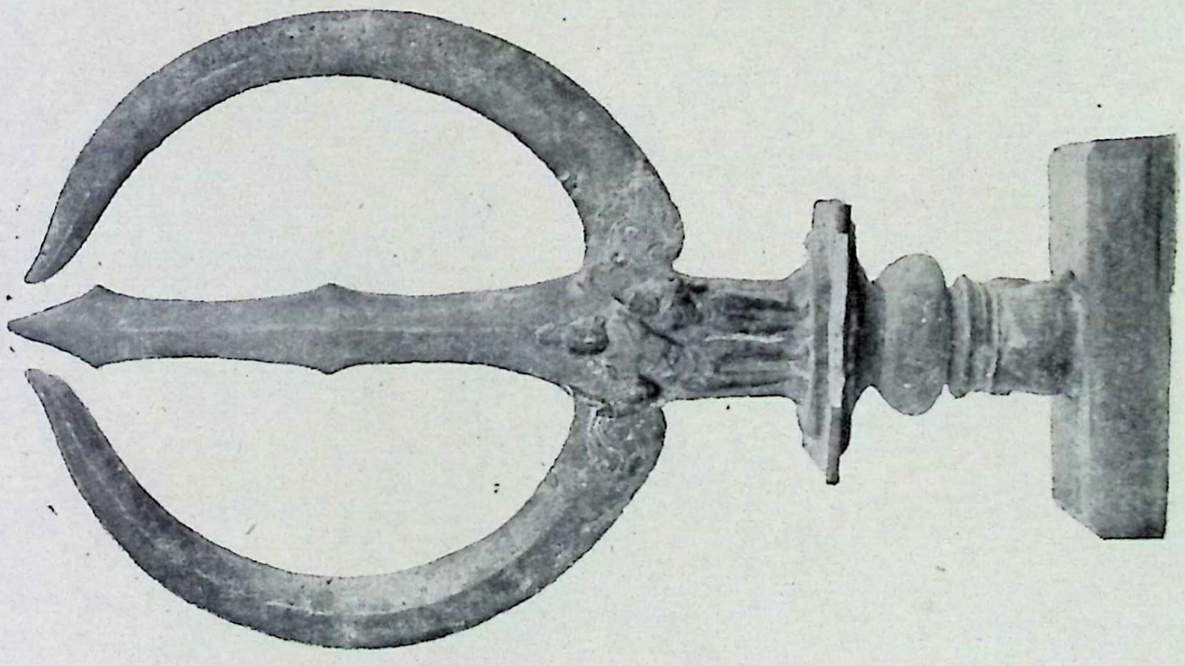

Fig. 292

PLATE CXLVI.

Fig. 234. Naṭeśa, belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Tanjore District; about the fourth quarter of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 235. Rāma group, Tirukkaḍaiyūr, Tanjore District; in the Vishṇu temple there; about the end of the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 234

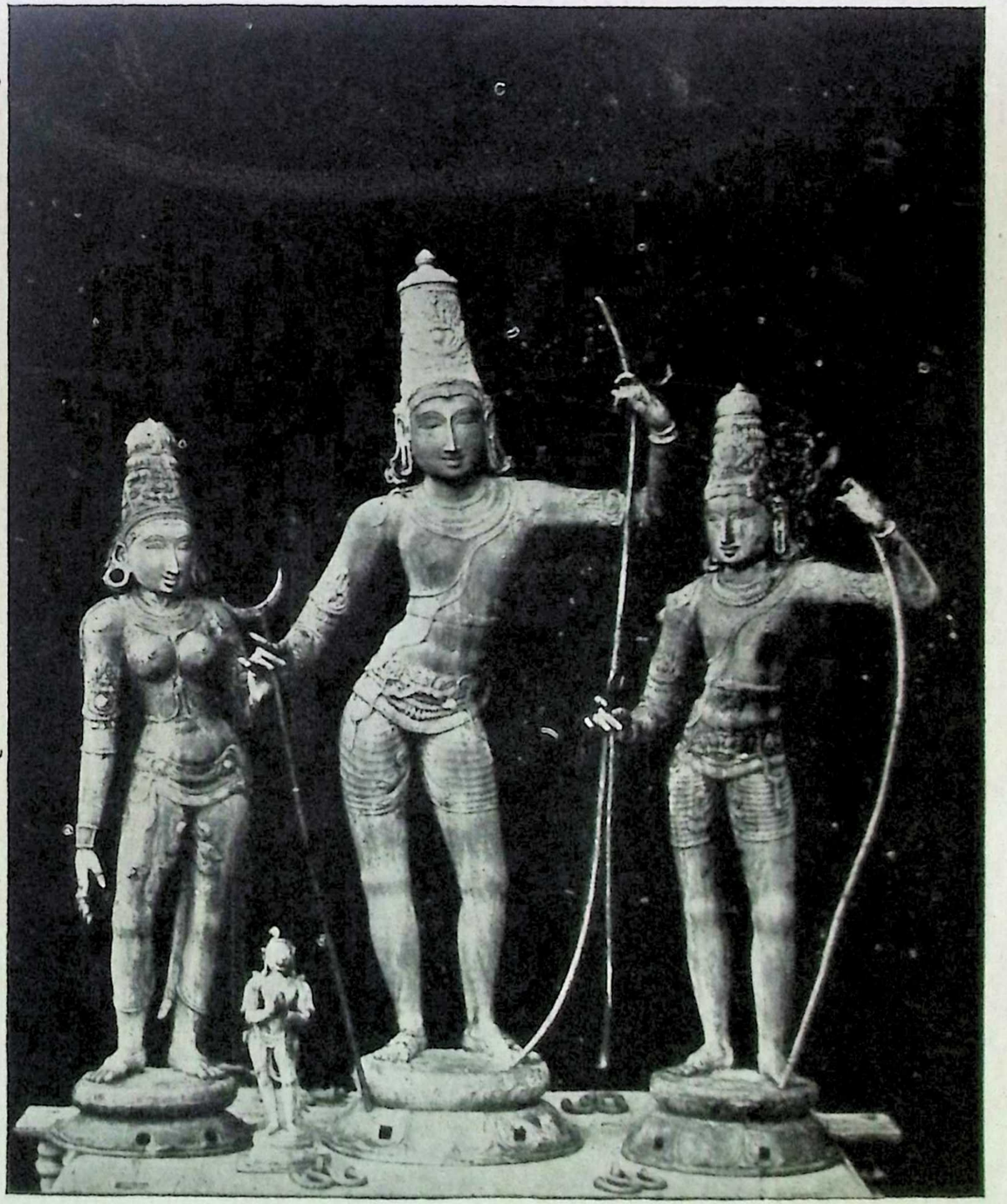

Fig. 235

PLATE CXLVII.

Fig. 235 A. Rāma and Sītā of Fig. 235.

Fig. 235 A

PLATE CXLVIII.

Fig 236. Naṭeśa, Veḷḷāḷagaram, Tanjore District; about 1200 A.D.

Fig. 237. Somāskanda, locality not known; now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London; about the beginning of the 13th century A.D.

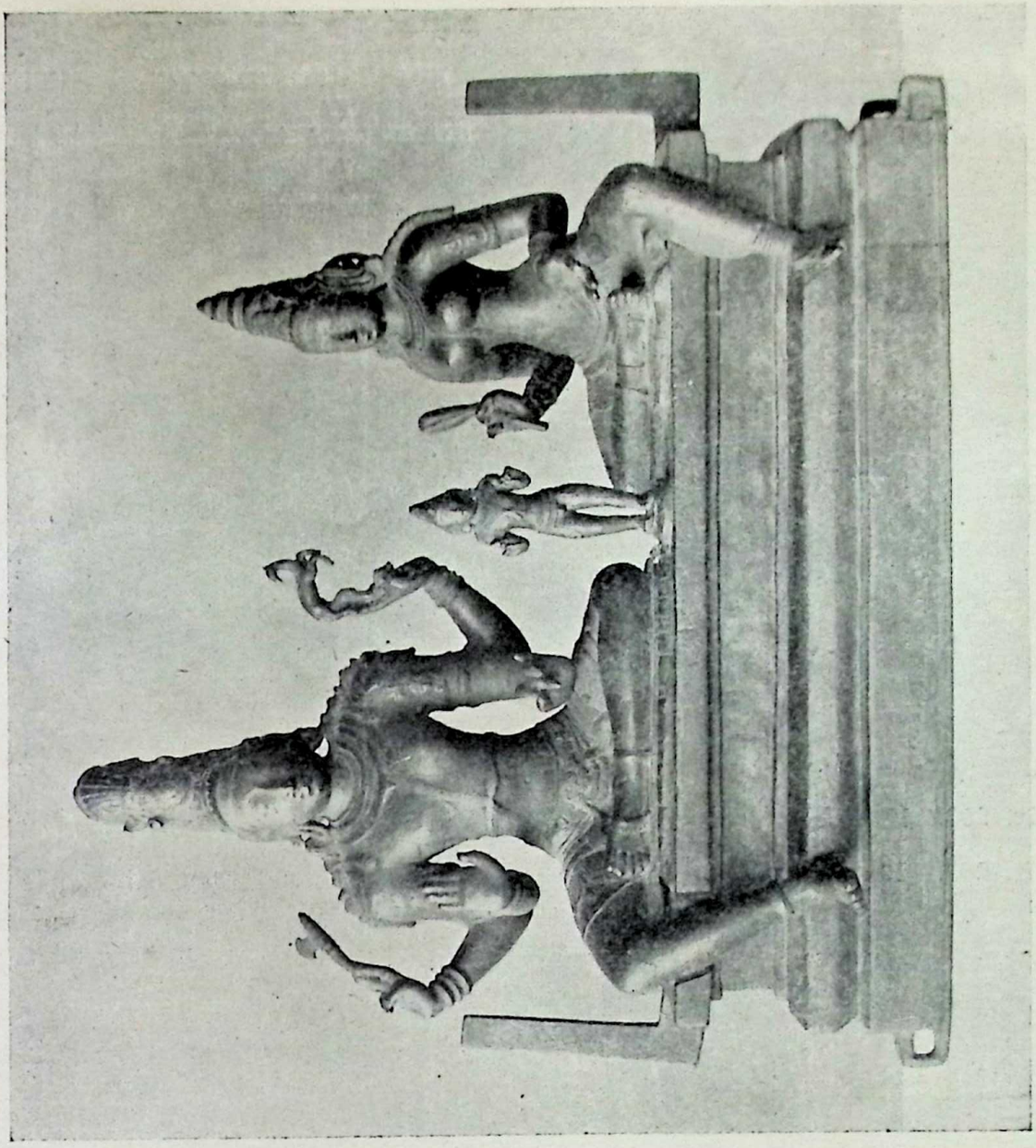

Fig. 287

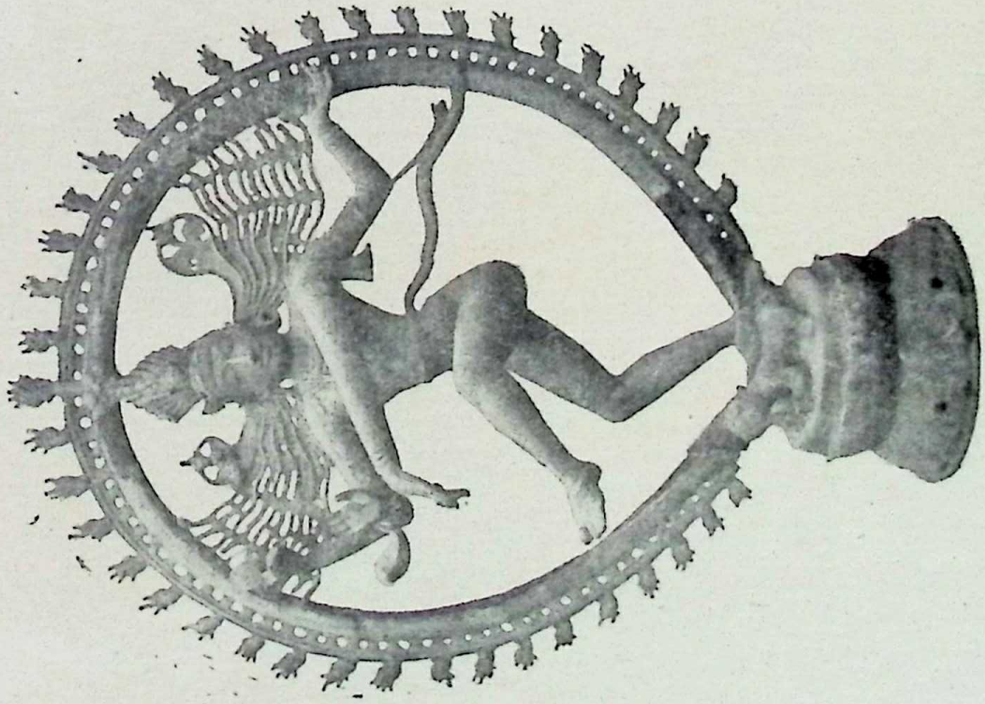

Fig. 286

PLATE CXLIX.

Fig. 238. Naṭeśa, Puṅganūr, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 237.

Fig. 239. Rear view of above.

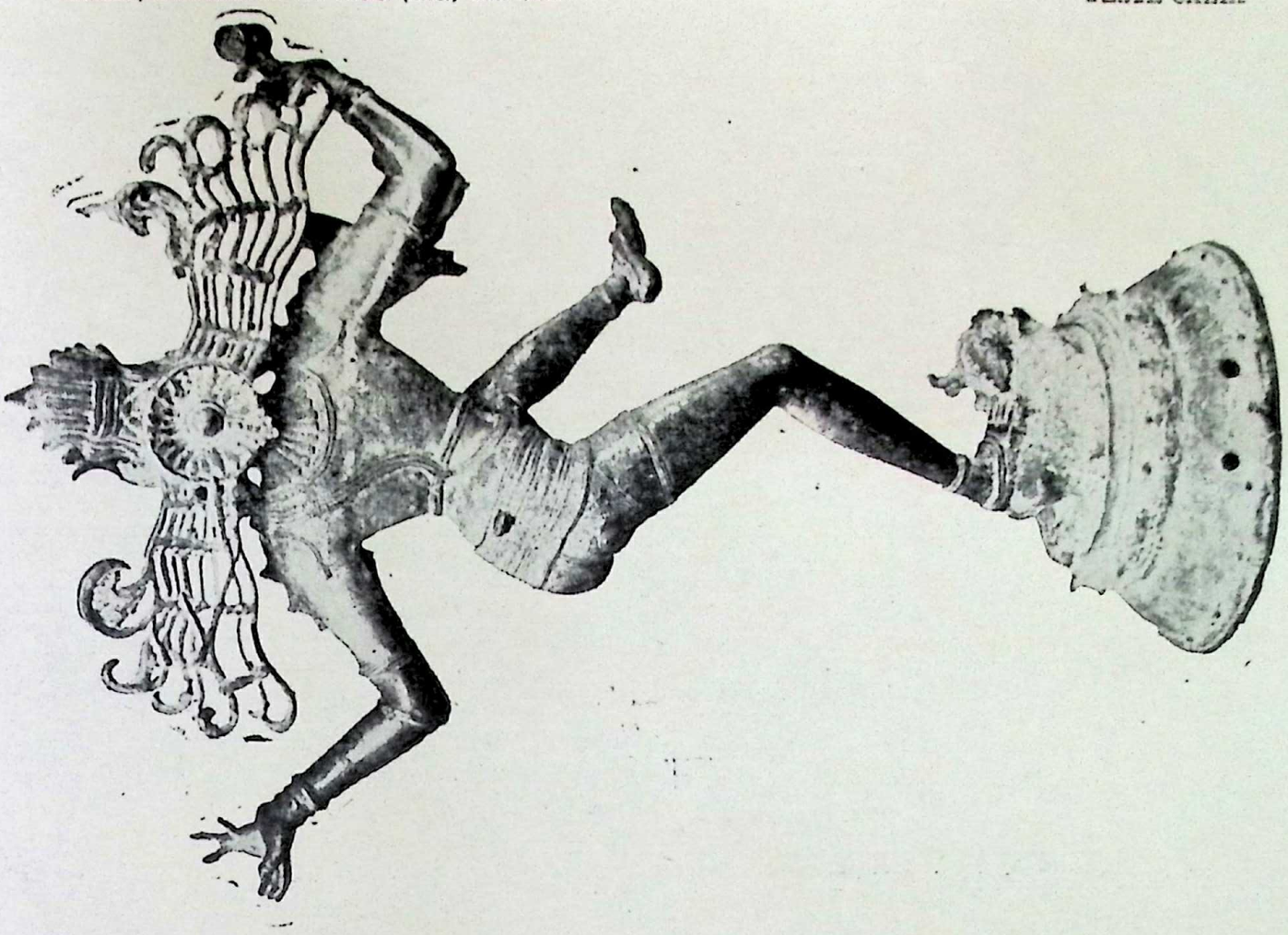

Fig. 239

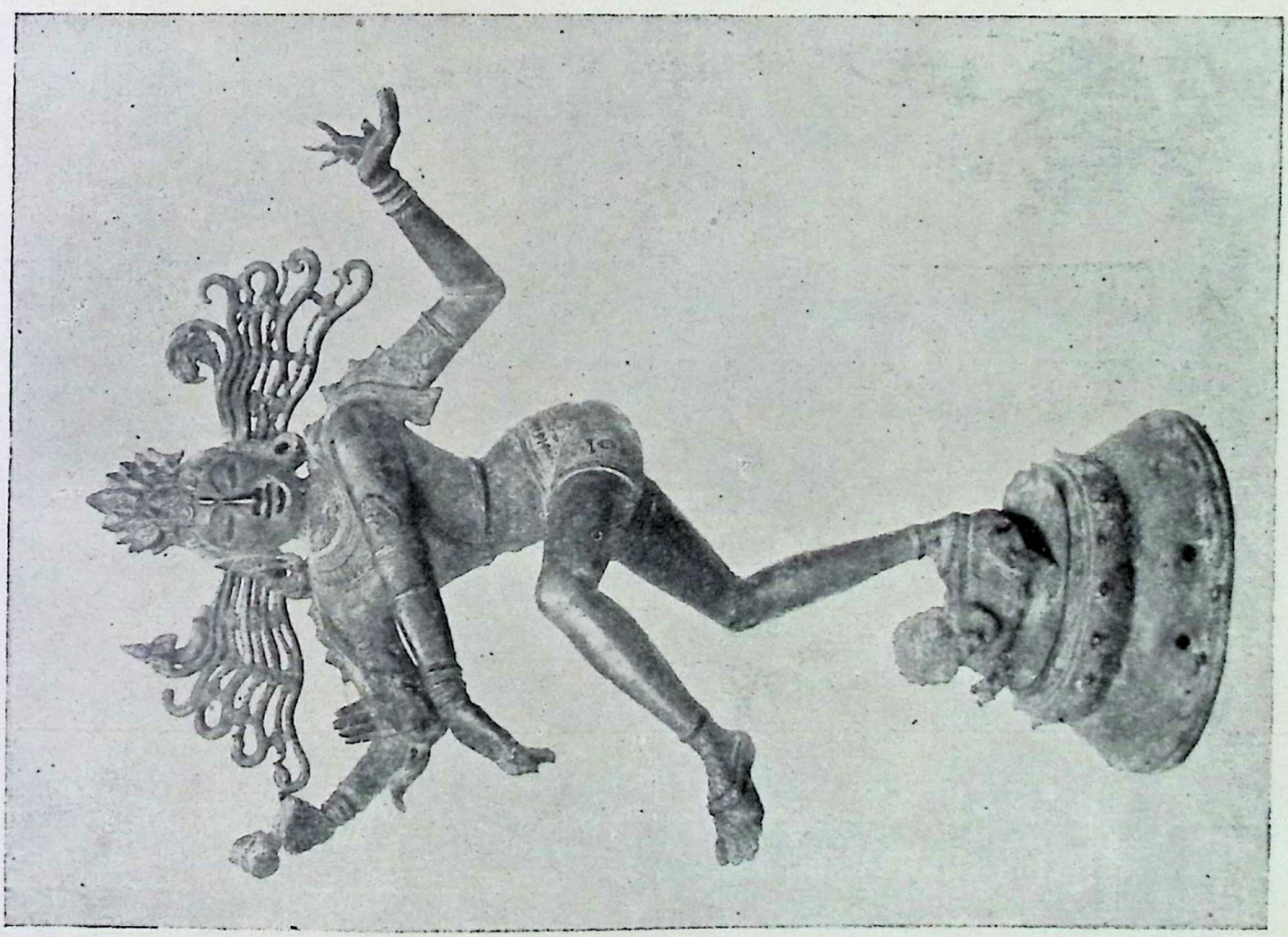

Fig. 238

PLATE CL.

Fig. 240. Umā, in the Big Temple at Tanjore ; date same as of Fig. 238.

Fig. 241. Kāḷī, seated, Senniyanviḍudi, Tanjore District; date about the same as of Fig. 240.

Fig. 240

Fig. 241

PLATE CLI.

Fig. 242. Kulottuṅga-choḷa III (?), Kālahasti, Chittoor District; formerly in the Śiva temple there, but now in a private collection, about the middle of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 243. Koṭpuli-nāyanār, Tiruppurambiyam, Tanjore District; first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 242

Fig. 243

PLATE CLII.

Fig. 244. Naṭeśa, locality not known ; now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London ; about the end of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 244

PLATE CLIII.

Fig. 245. Somāskanda, Kīḷaiyūr, South Arcot District; about the end of the first quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 246. Rear view of above.

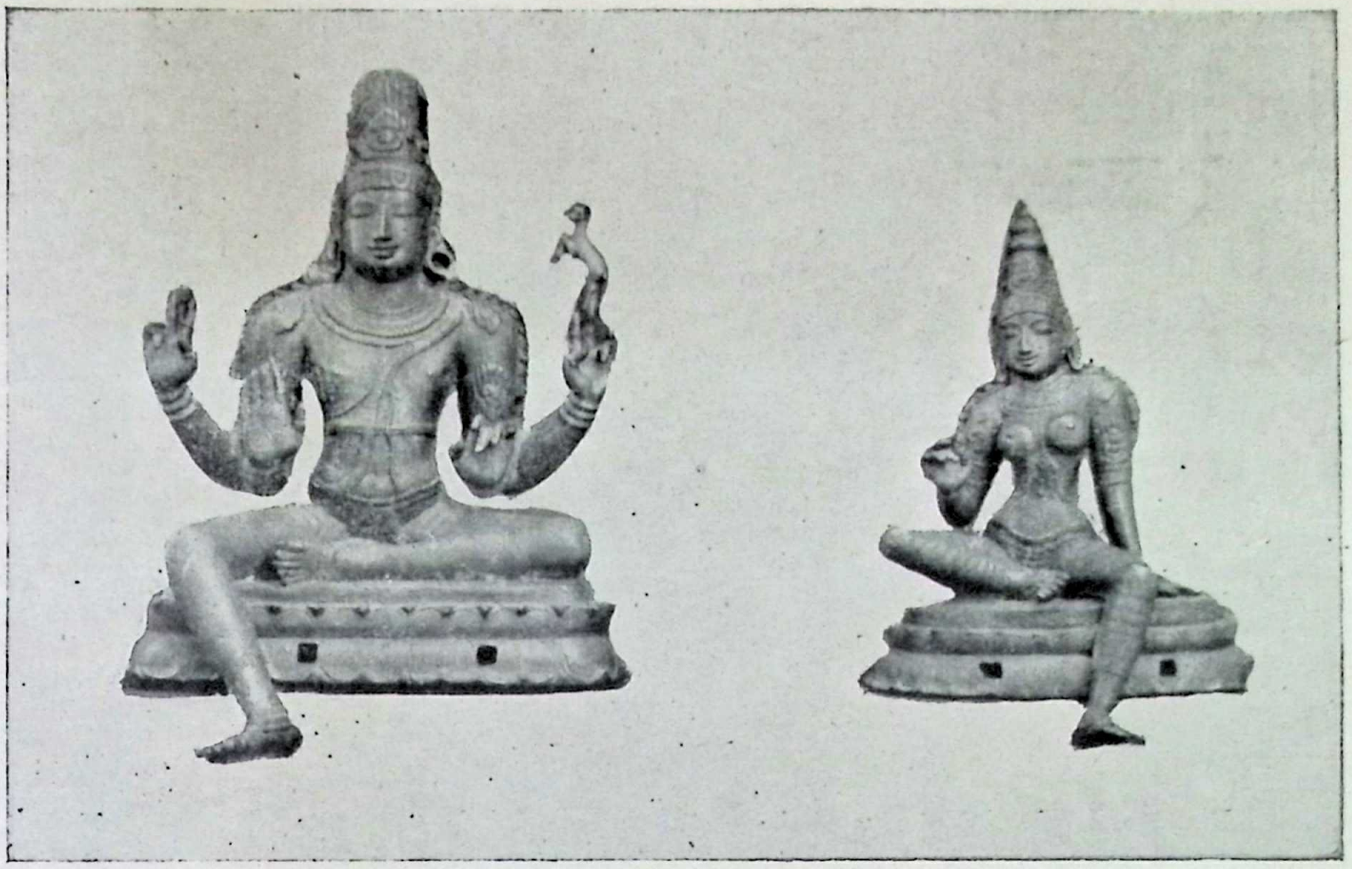

Fig. 245

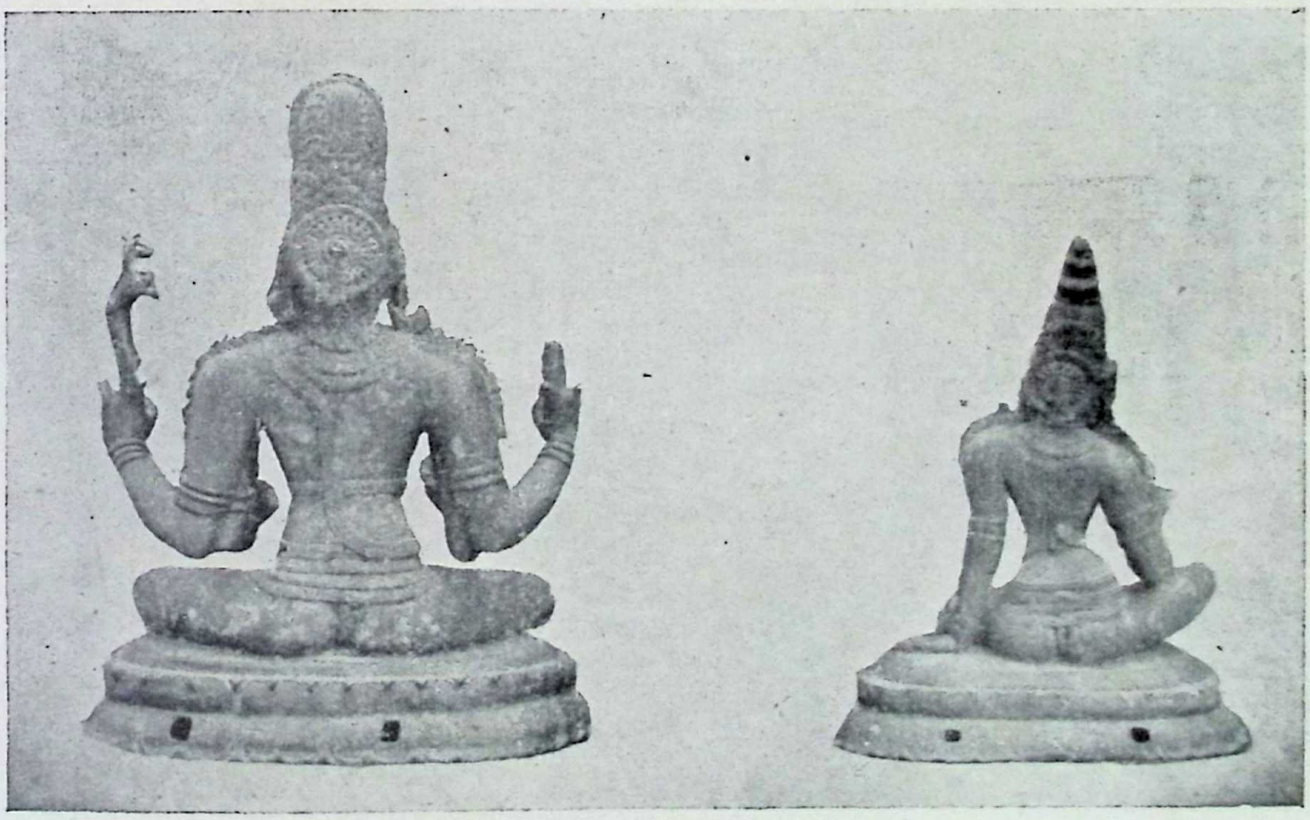

Fig. 246

PLATE CLIV.

Fig. 245 A. Detail of Śiva of Fig. 245.

Fig. 247. Ambikā group (Jaina), Siṅgāṇikkuppam, South Arcot District; about the beginning of the second quarter of the 13th century A.D.

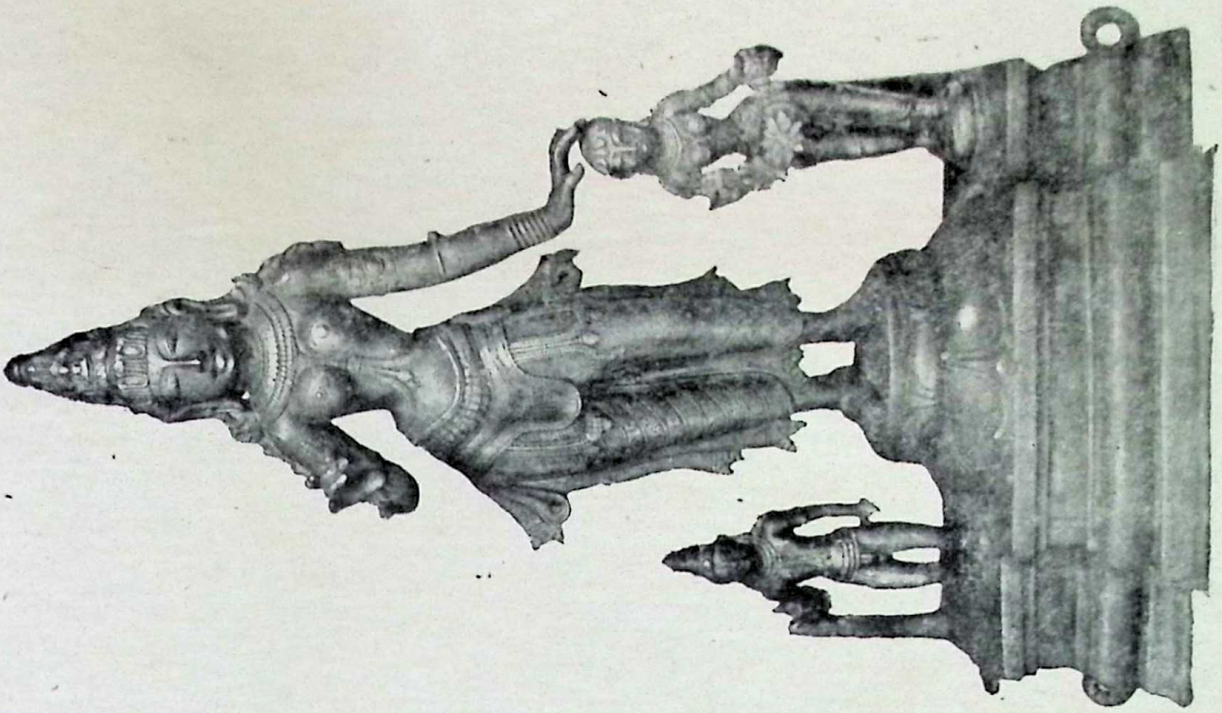

Fig. 247

Fig. 245 A

PLATE CLV.

Fig. 248. Kaumodaki, locality not known, purchased at Madras; about the second quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 249. Sudarśana, forming a group with the above.

Fig. 248

Fig. 249

PLATE CLVI.

Fig. 250. Naṭeśa, Kaṅkoḍuttavanitam, Tanjore District; middle of the second quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 250

PLATE CLVII.

Fig. 251. Pārvatī, Tiruveṭkaḷam, South Arcot District; in the Śiva temple, there; about the middle of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 252. Rear view of above.

Fig. 251

Fig. 252

PLATE CLVIII.

Fig. 253. Somāskanda, Kunnāṇḍār-kovil, in the former Pudukkottai State; in the Śiva temple there; third quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 254. Durgā, standing, Māriyūr, Tanjore District; last quarter of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 255. Gaṇeśa, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi, Tanjore District: date same as of Fig. 254.

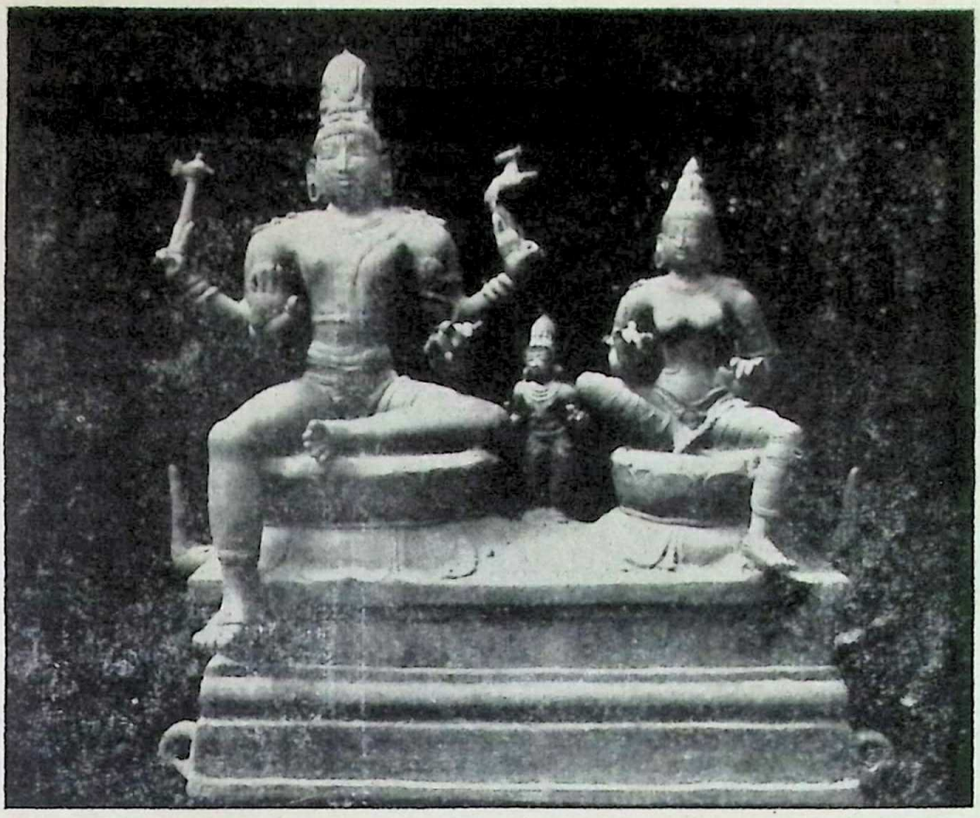

Fig. 253

Fig. 254

Fig. 255

PLATE CLIX.

Fig. 256. Somāskanda, locality not known; now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta; about the last quarter of the 13th century A.D.

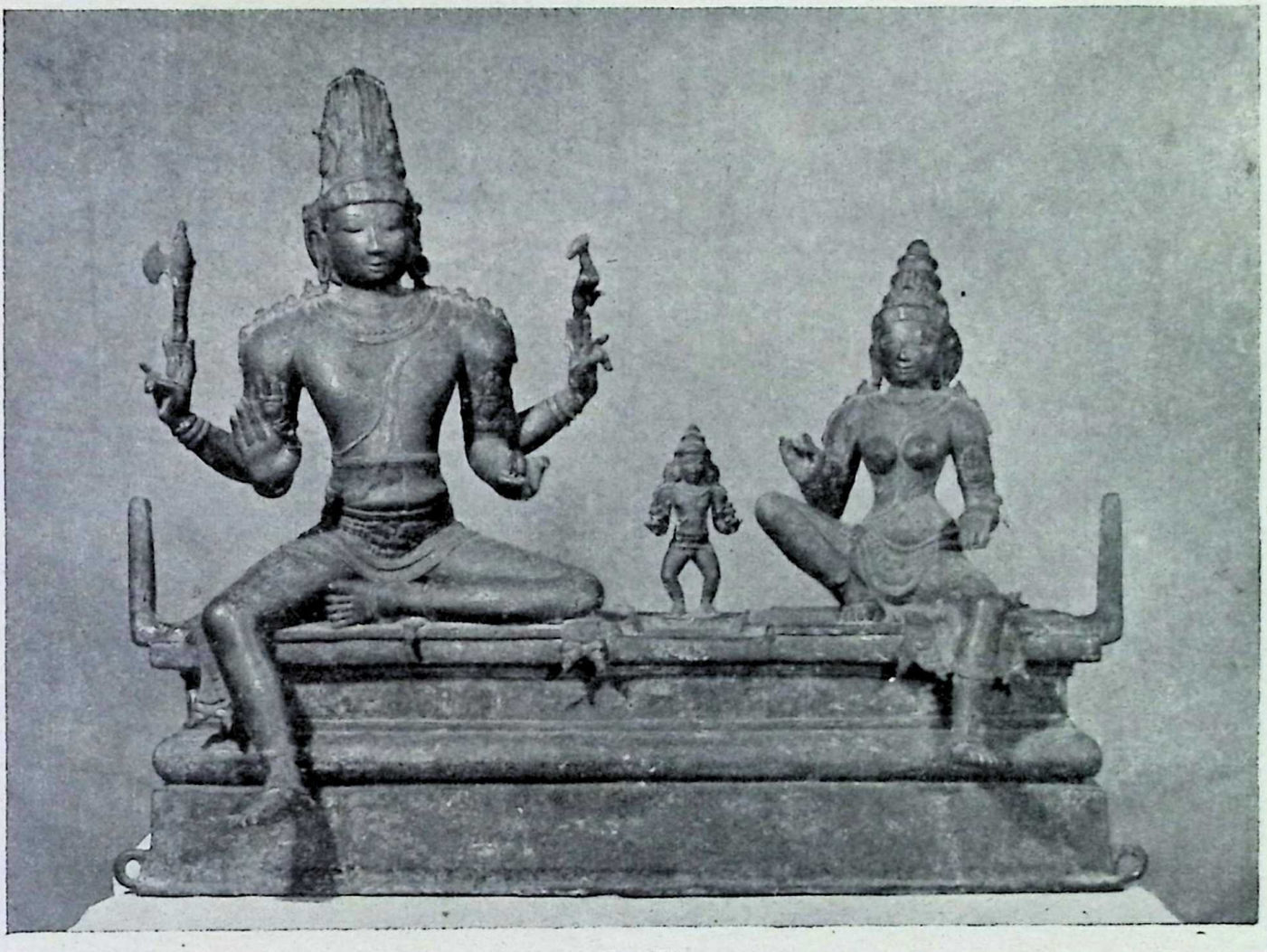

Fig. 256

PLATE CLX.

Fig. 257. Naṭeśa, Ūṭṭāttūr, Tiruchirappalli District; about the closing years of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 258. Pārvatī, Tiruvānaikkāval, Tiruchirappalli District; in the Jambukeśvara temple there; date same as of Fig. 257.

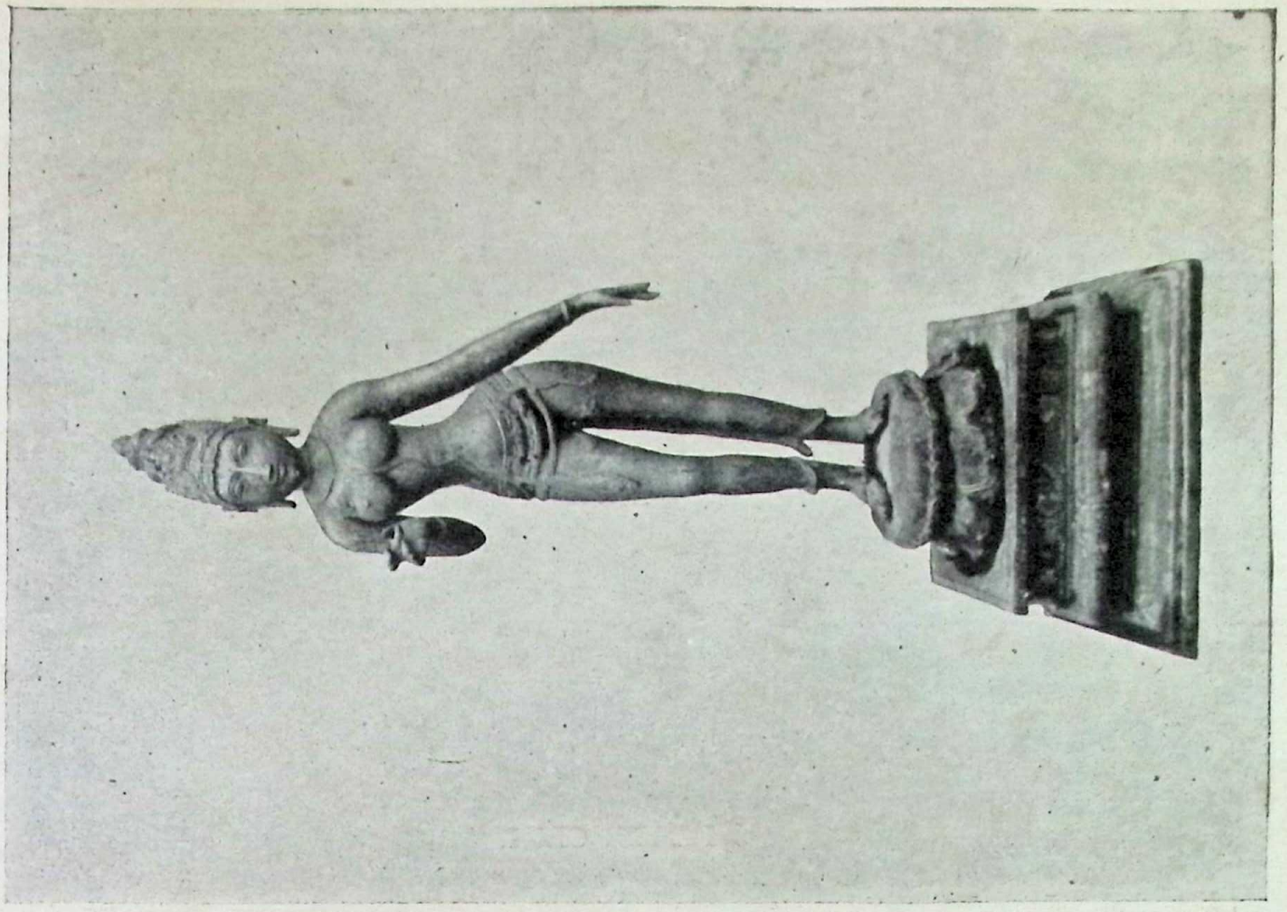

Fig. 258

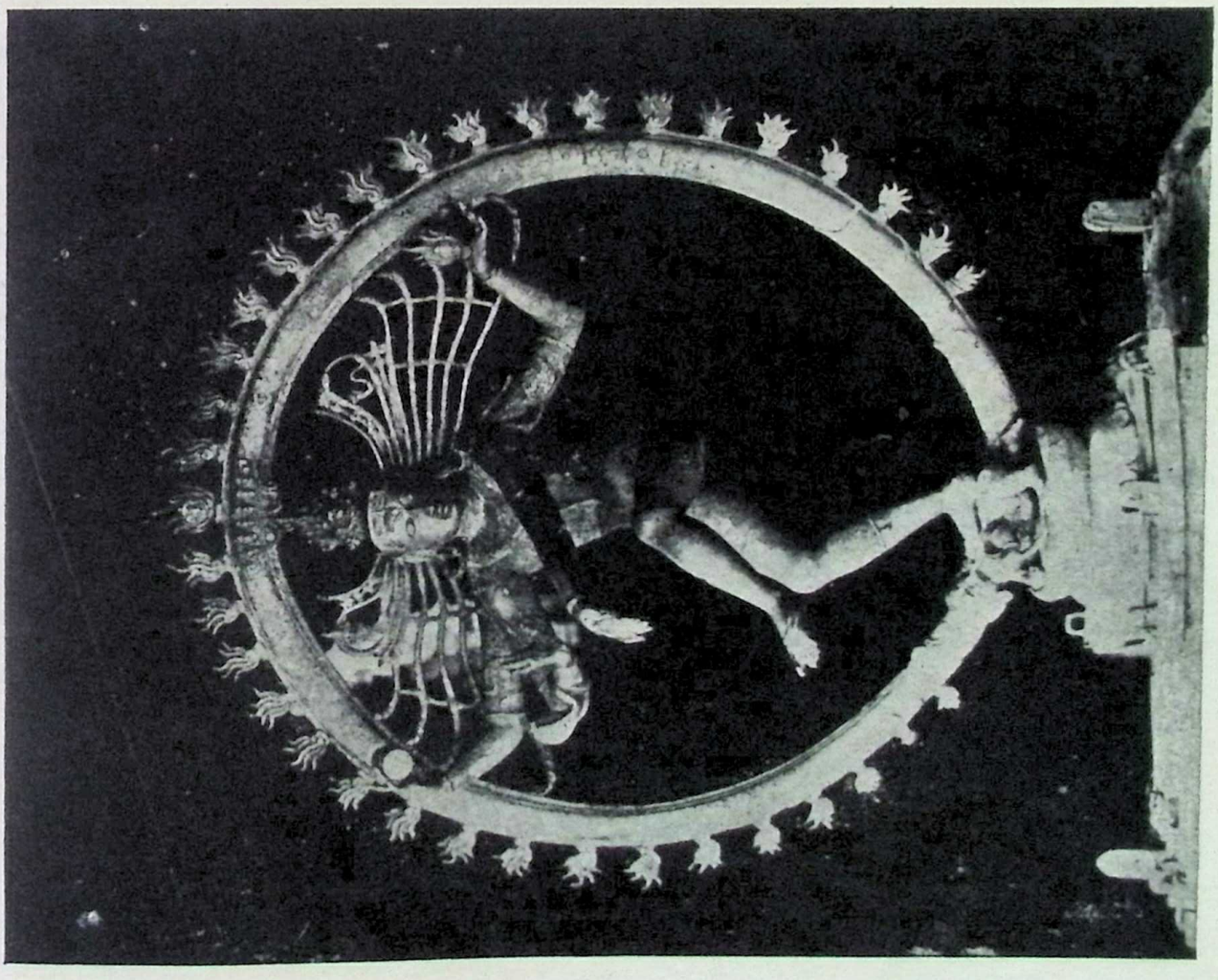

Fig. 257

PLATE CLXI.

Fig. 259. Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, from near Śivagaṅgā, Ramanathapuram District; about 1200 A.D.

Fig. 259

PLATE CLXII.

Fig. 260. Vishṇu, seated, Sermādevi, Tirunelveli District; about the middle of the 13th century A.D.

Fig. 261. Pārvatī, Kuttālam, Tirunelveli District; date same as of Fig. 260.

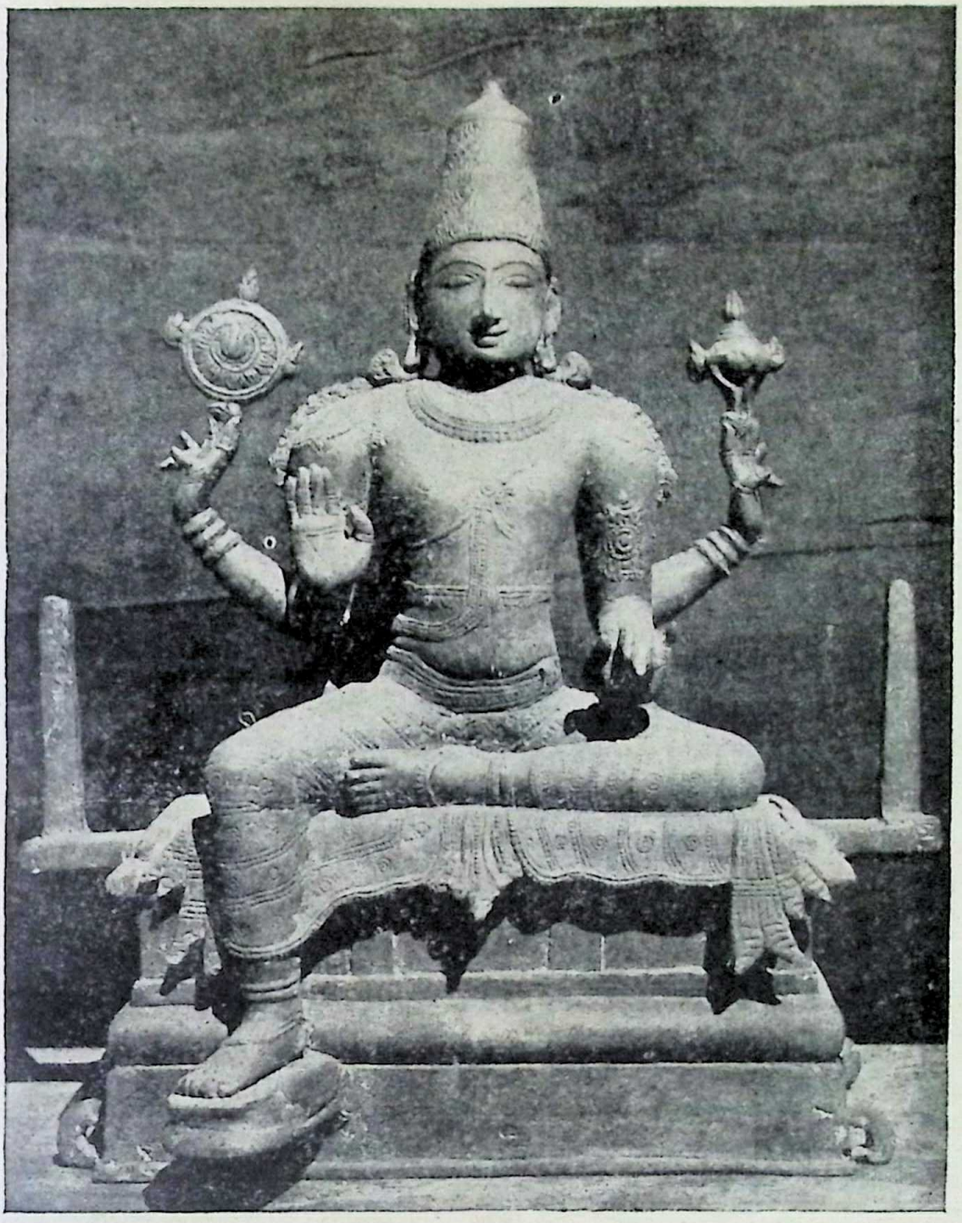

Fig. 260

Fig. 261

PLATE CLXIII.

Fig. 262. Umāsahita, from Tanjore District ; beginning of the 14th century A.D.

Fig. 263. Pradoshamūrti, Tiruvāymūr, Tanjore District ; date same as of Fig. 262.

Fig. 264. Jñānasambanda, Lālpeṭ, South Arcot District ; middle of the 14th century A.D.

Fig. 265. Rear view of above.

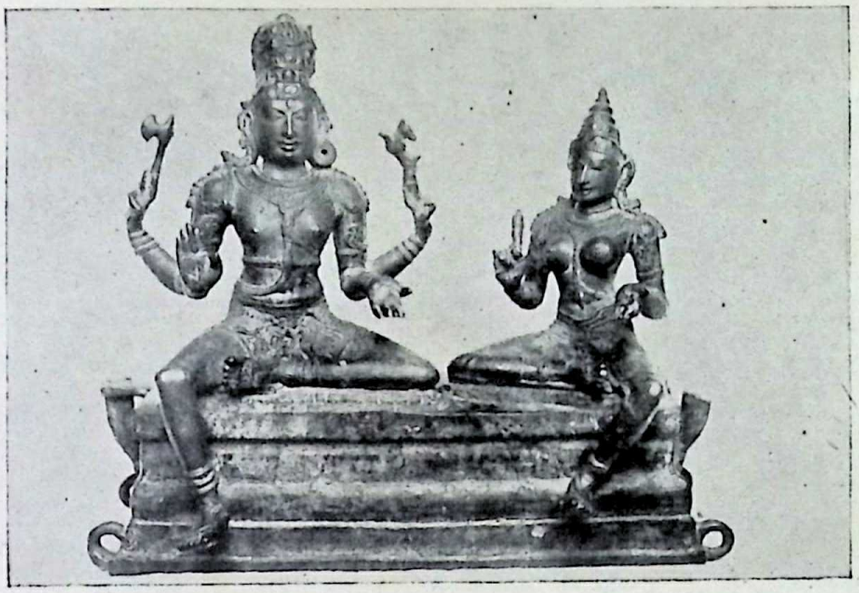

Fig. 262

Fig. 263

Fig. 264

Fig. 265

PLATE CLXIV.

Fig. 266. Mahāvīra, standing, Siṅgāṇikkuppam, South Arcot District; date same as of Fig. 264.

Fig. 267. Naṭeśa, Koṇḍavittāntiḍal, Tanjore District; last quarter of the 14th century A.D.

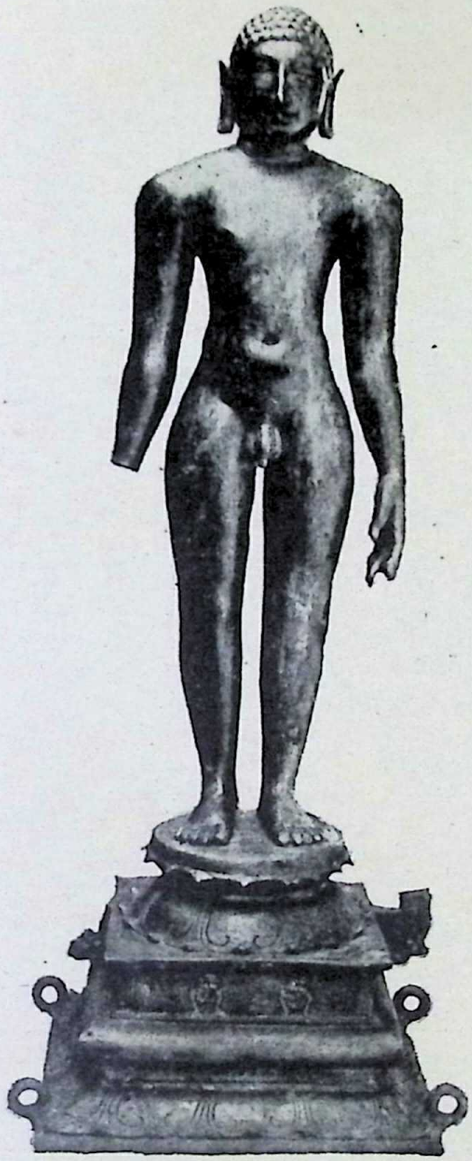

Fig. 266

Fig. 267

PLATE CLXV.

Fig. 268. Chaṇḍikeśvara, Polonnaruwa, Ceylon; in the Colombo Museum; about the end of the 12th century A.D.

Figs. 268 A, B, C. Saivite Saints (Sundaramūrti, Appar and Jñānasambanda); in the same institution; about the end of the 13th century A.D.

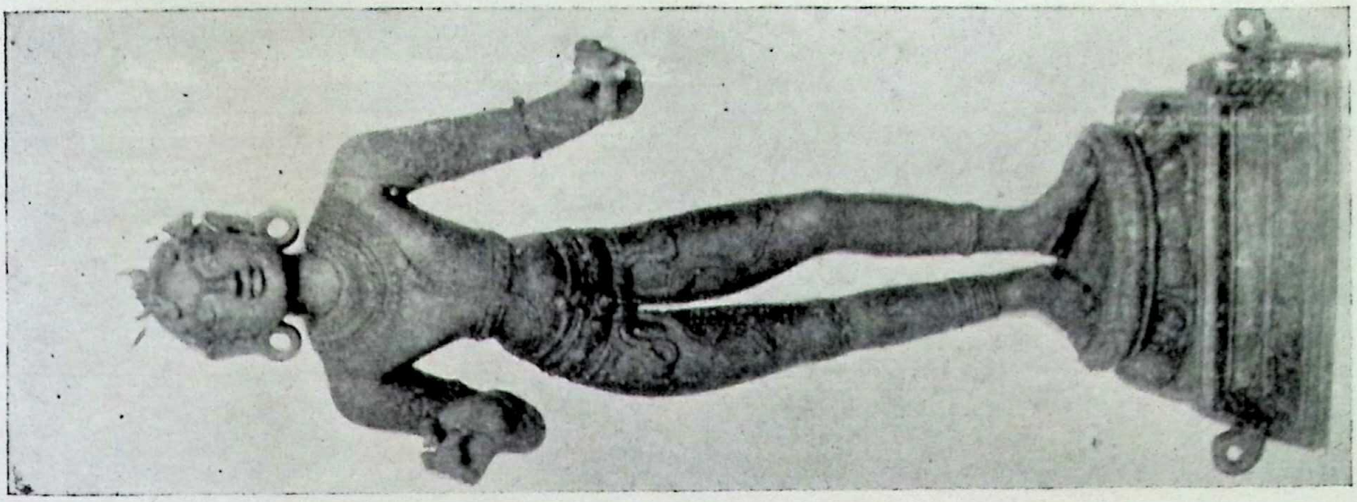

Fig. 268 C

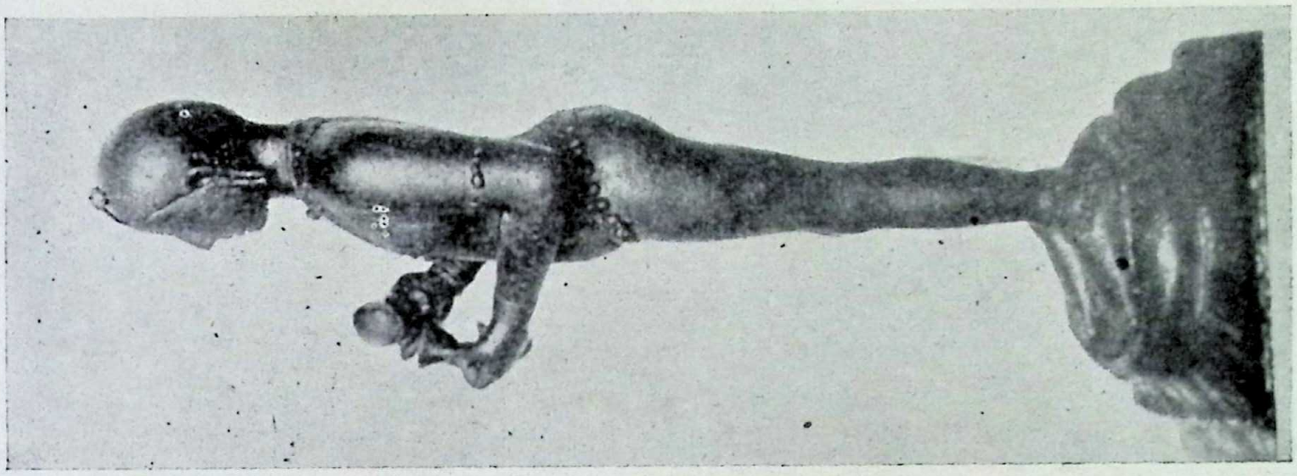

Fig. 268 B

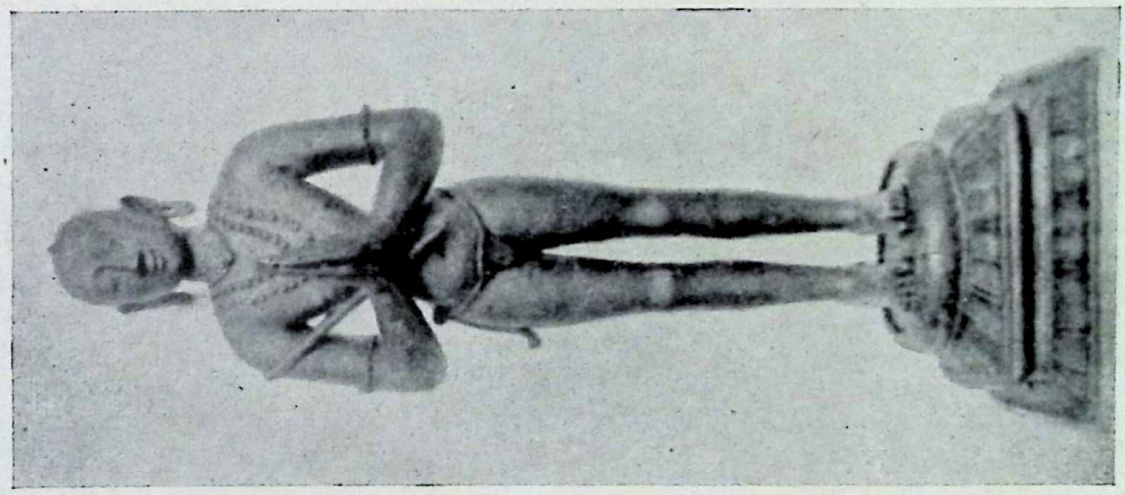

Fig. 268 A

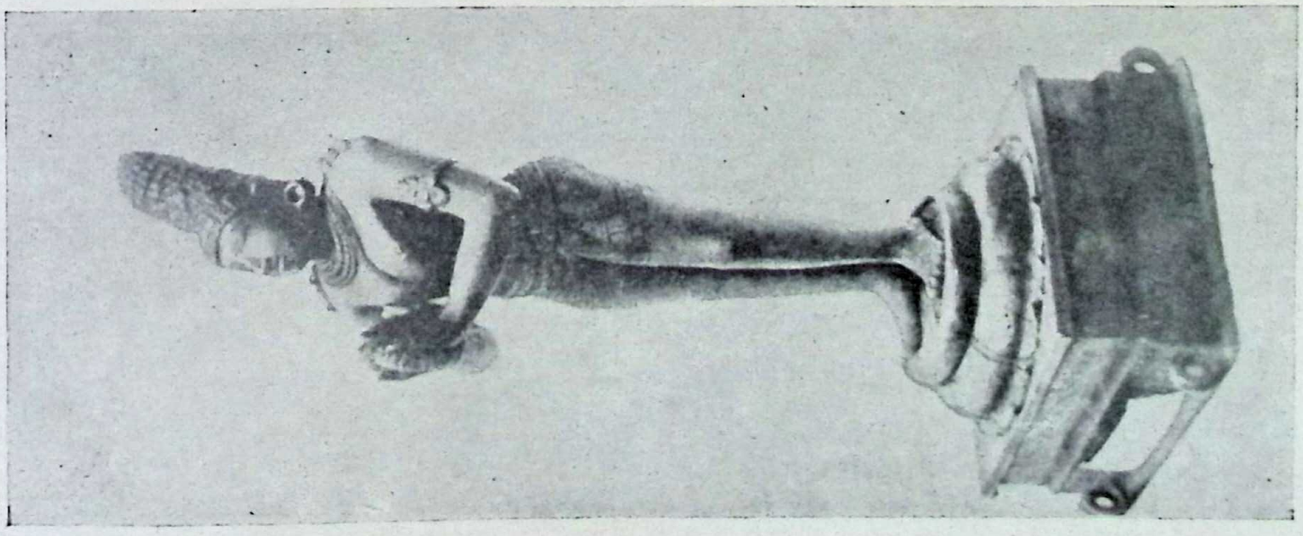

Fig. 268

PLATE CLXVI.

Fig. 269. Naṭeśa, in the same institution where Fig. 268 is; about 1300 A.D.

Fig. 270. Naṭeśa, in the same institution as above; first quarter of the 14th century A.D.

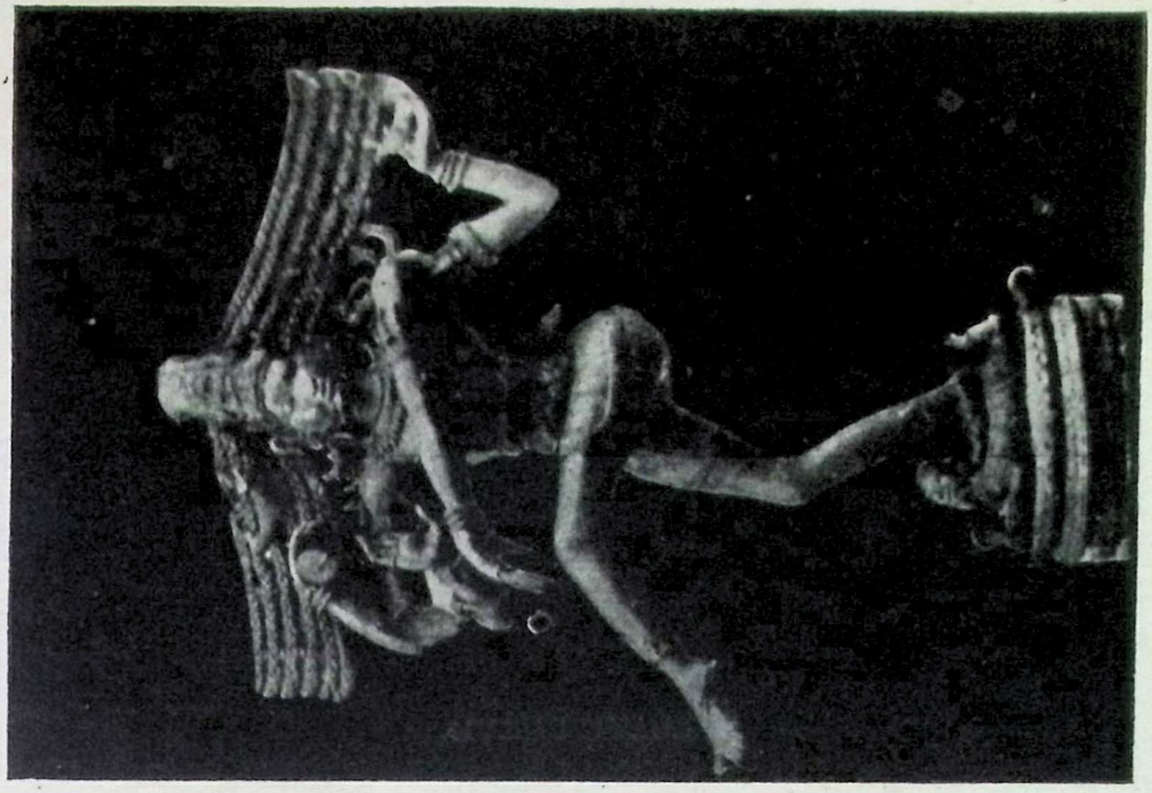

Fig. 270

Fig. 269

PLATE CLXVII.

Fig. 271. Śiva, in the same institution where Fig. 270 is; second half of the 14th century A.D.

Fig. 272. Bull, probably forming a group with the above.

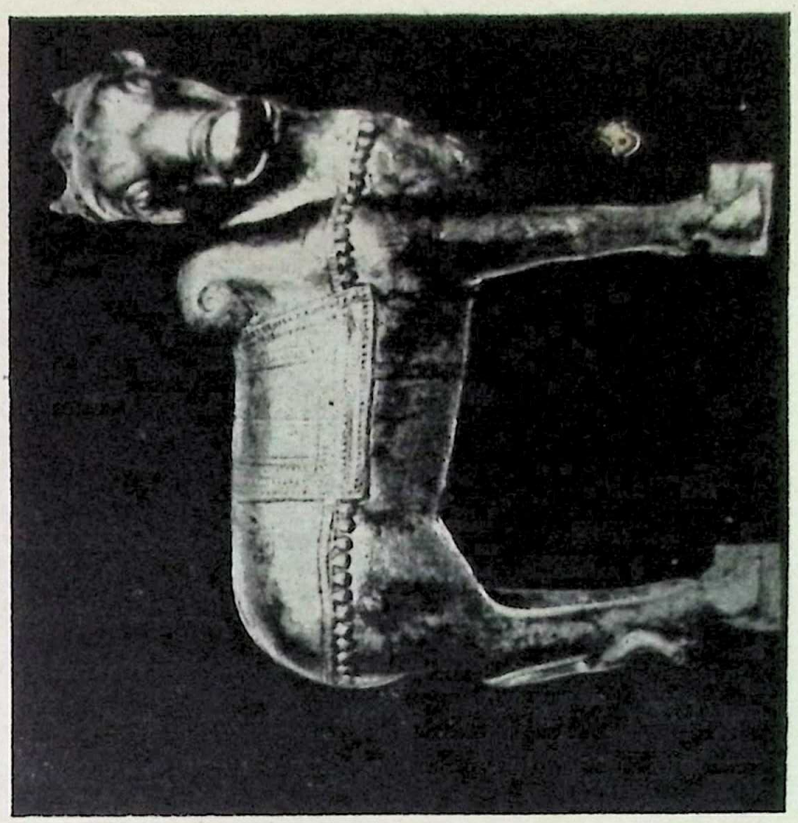

Fig. 272

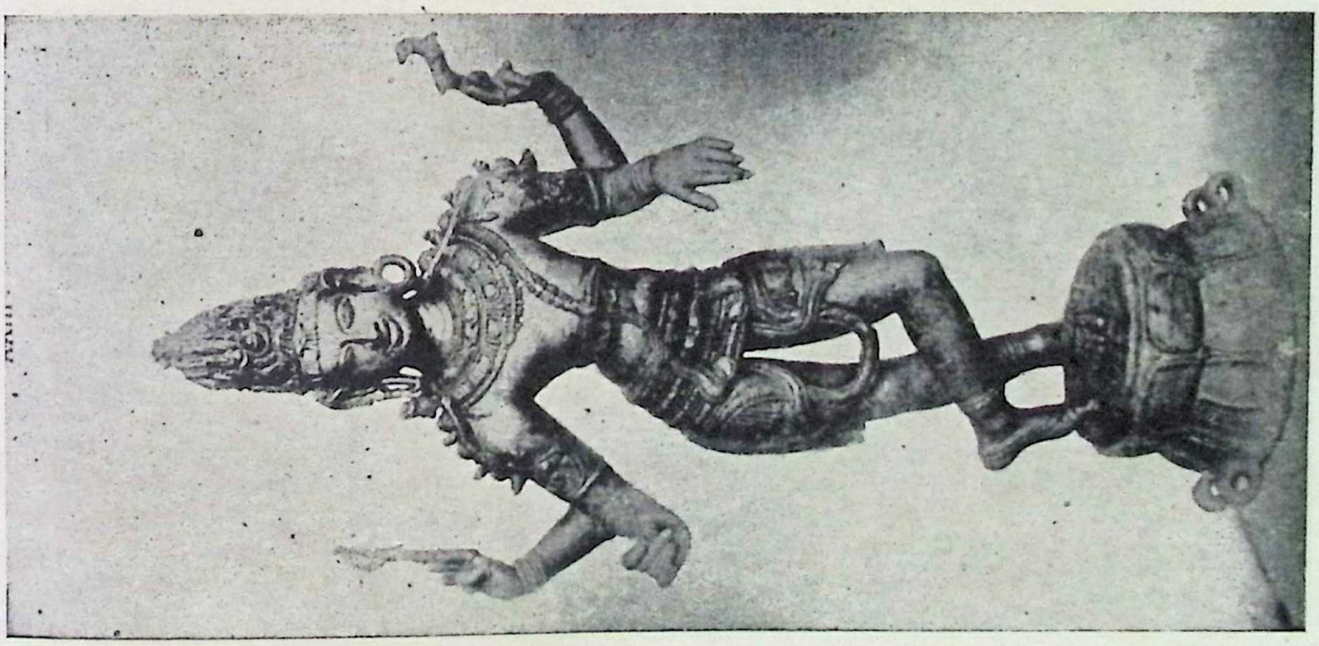

Fig. 271

PLATE CLXVIII.

Fig. 273. Pārśvanātha, Kogali, Bellary District; about the 11th century A.D.

Fig. 274. Lamp-bearer, Warangal; about the 12th century A.D.

Fig. 275. Rear view of above.

Fig. 276. Mahāvīra, standing, Kogali, Bellary District; 13th–14th century A.D.

Fig. 277. Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār, Kālahasti, Chittoor District; middle of the 15th century A.D.

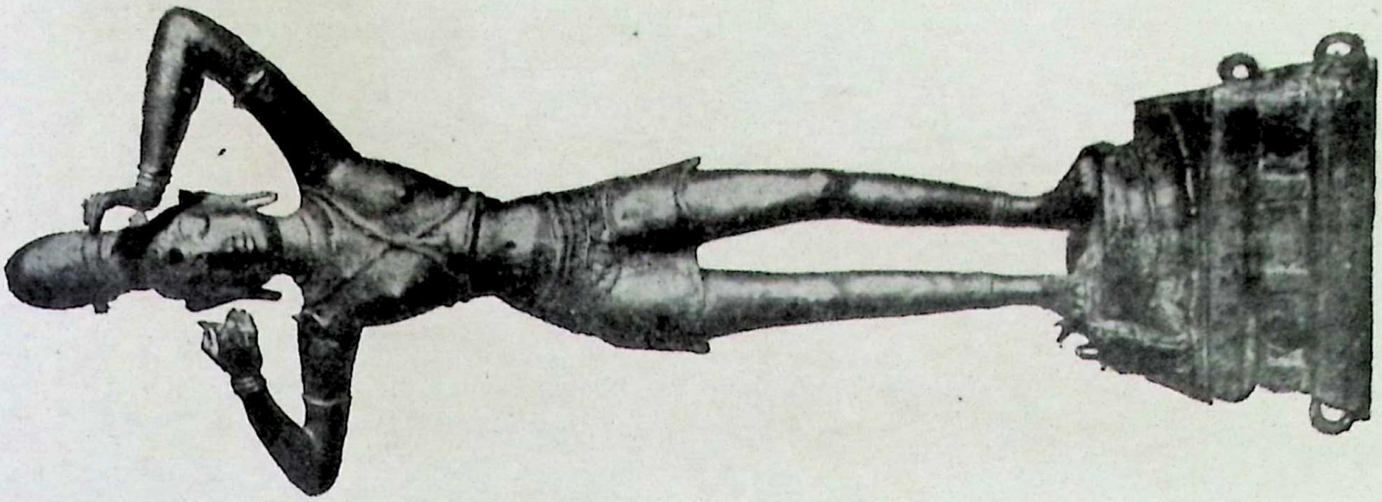

Fig. 277

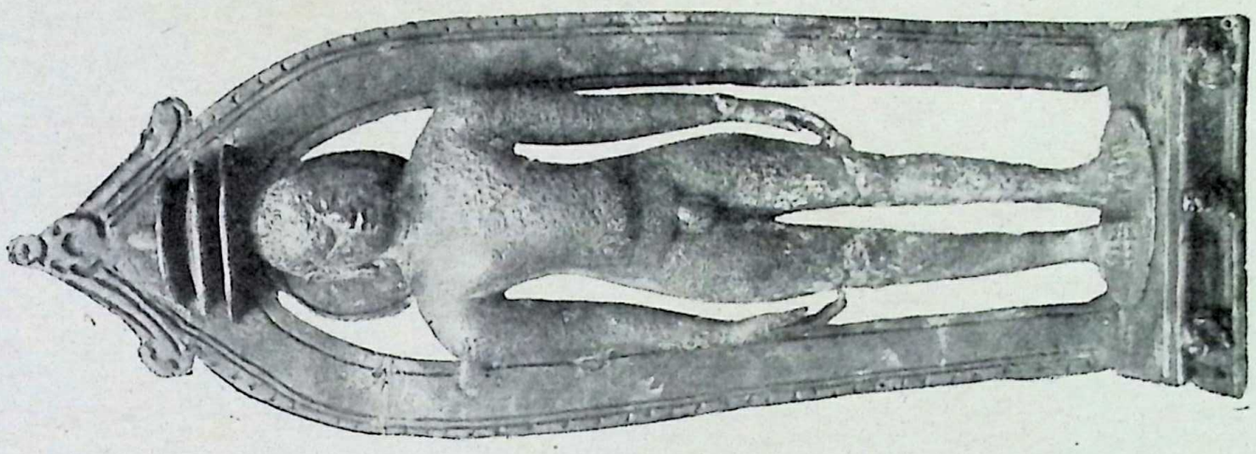

Fig. 276

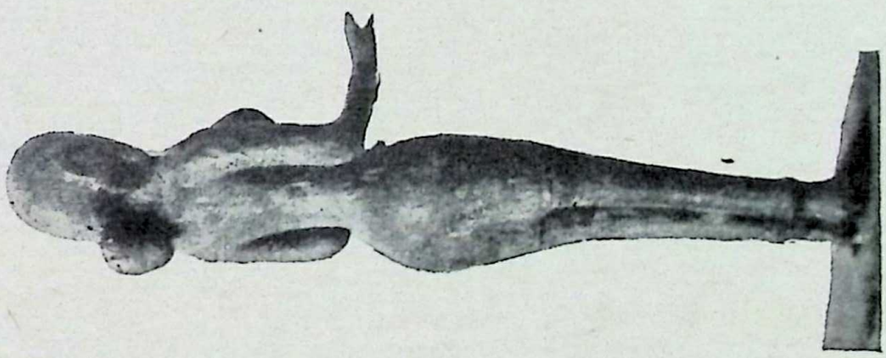

Fig. 275

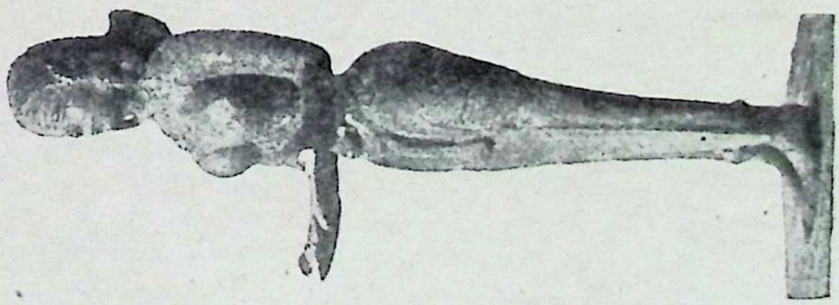

Fig. 274

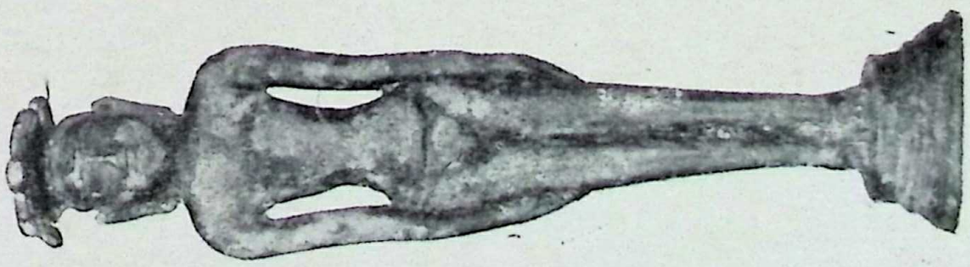

Fig. 273

PLATE CLXIX.

Fig. 278. Kṛishṇadeva-rāya and his queens, Tirumalai, Chittoor District, in the Śrīnivāsa-perumāḷ temple there ; early decades of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 278

PLATE CLXX.

Fig. 279. Veṇugopāla, Rukmiṇī, and Satyabhāmā, Chimakūrti, Guntur District; about 1600 A.D.

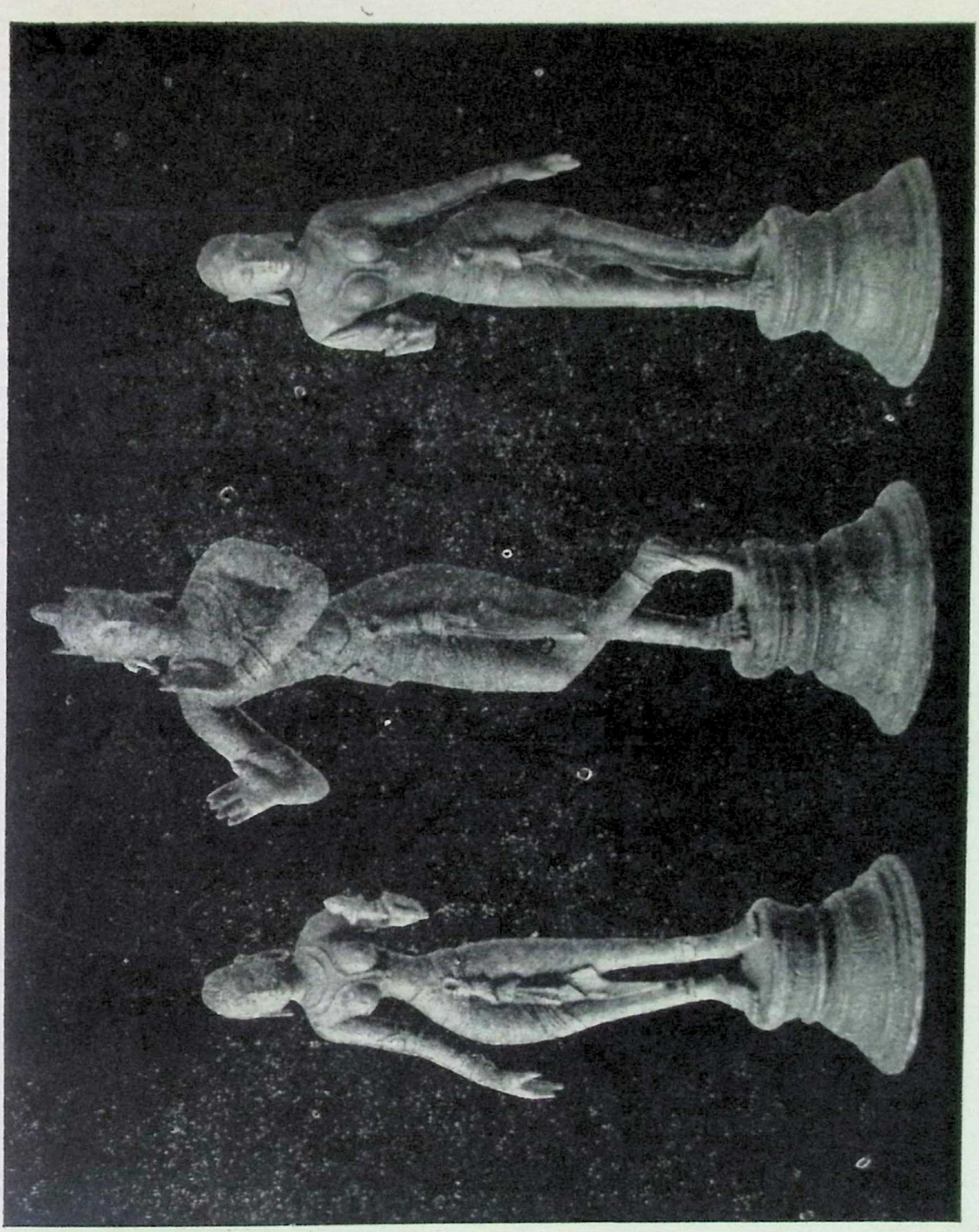

Fig. 279

PLATE CLXXI.

Fig. 280. Rear view of Fig. 279.

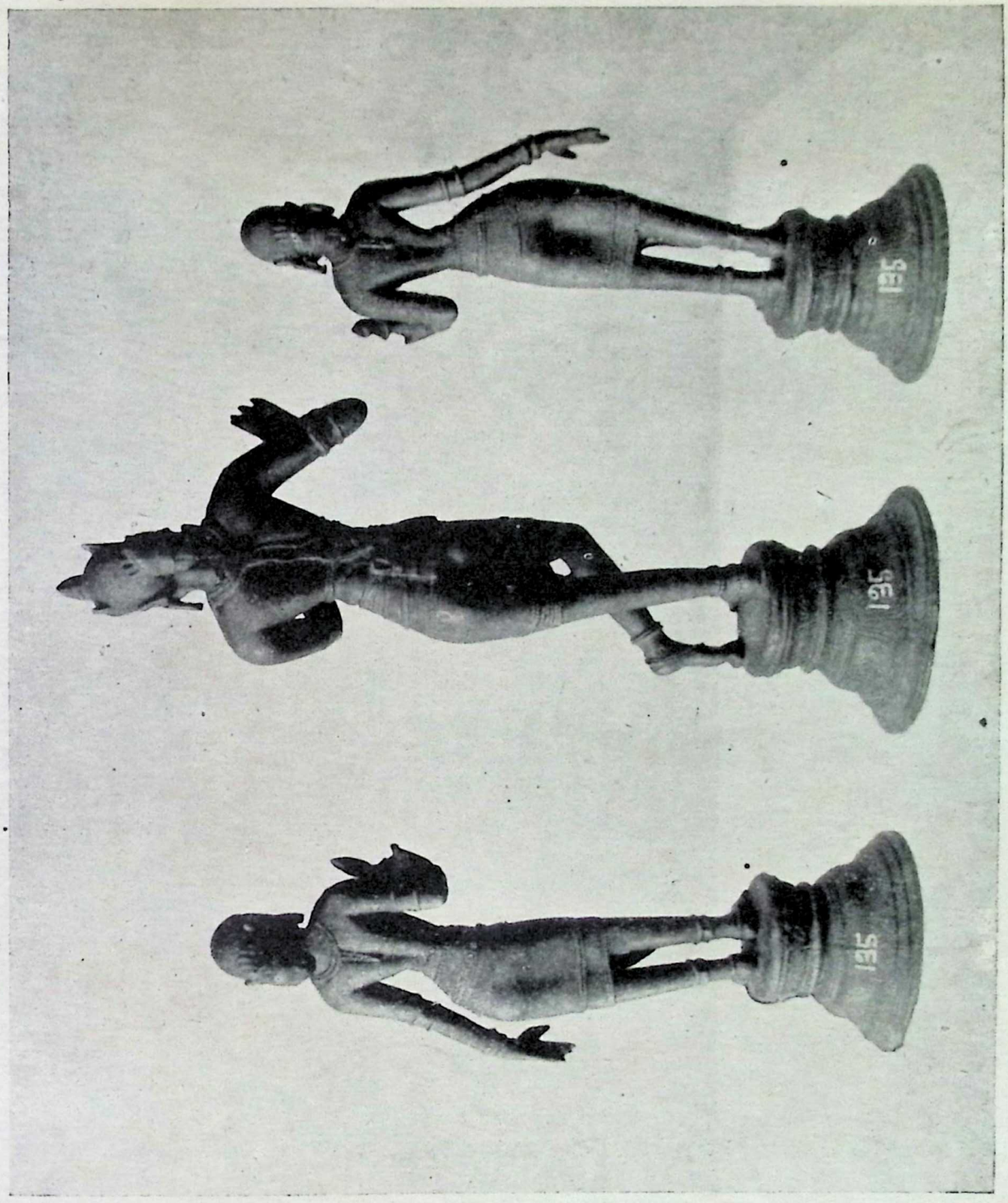

Fig. 280

PLATE CLXXII.

Fig. 281. Kaṅkāḷamūrti, Tirukkalar, Tanjore District; beginning of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 282. Rear view of above.

Fig. 281

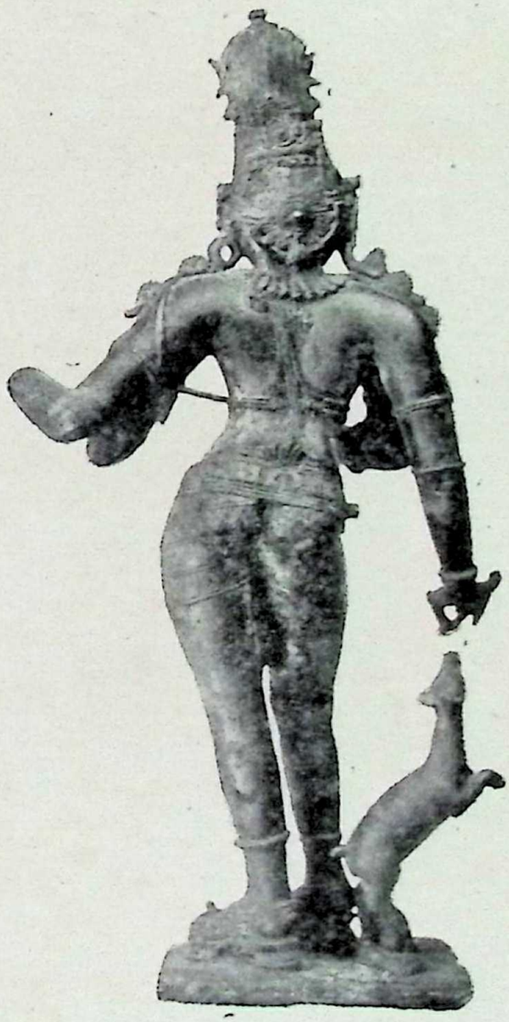

Fig. 282

PLATE CLXXIII.

Fig. 283. Yoga-narasiṁha, locality not known, (but certainly from a place in Choḷa territory): first quarter of the 15th century A.D.

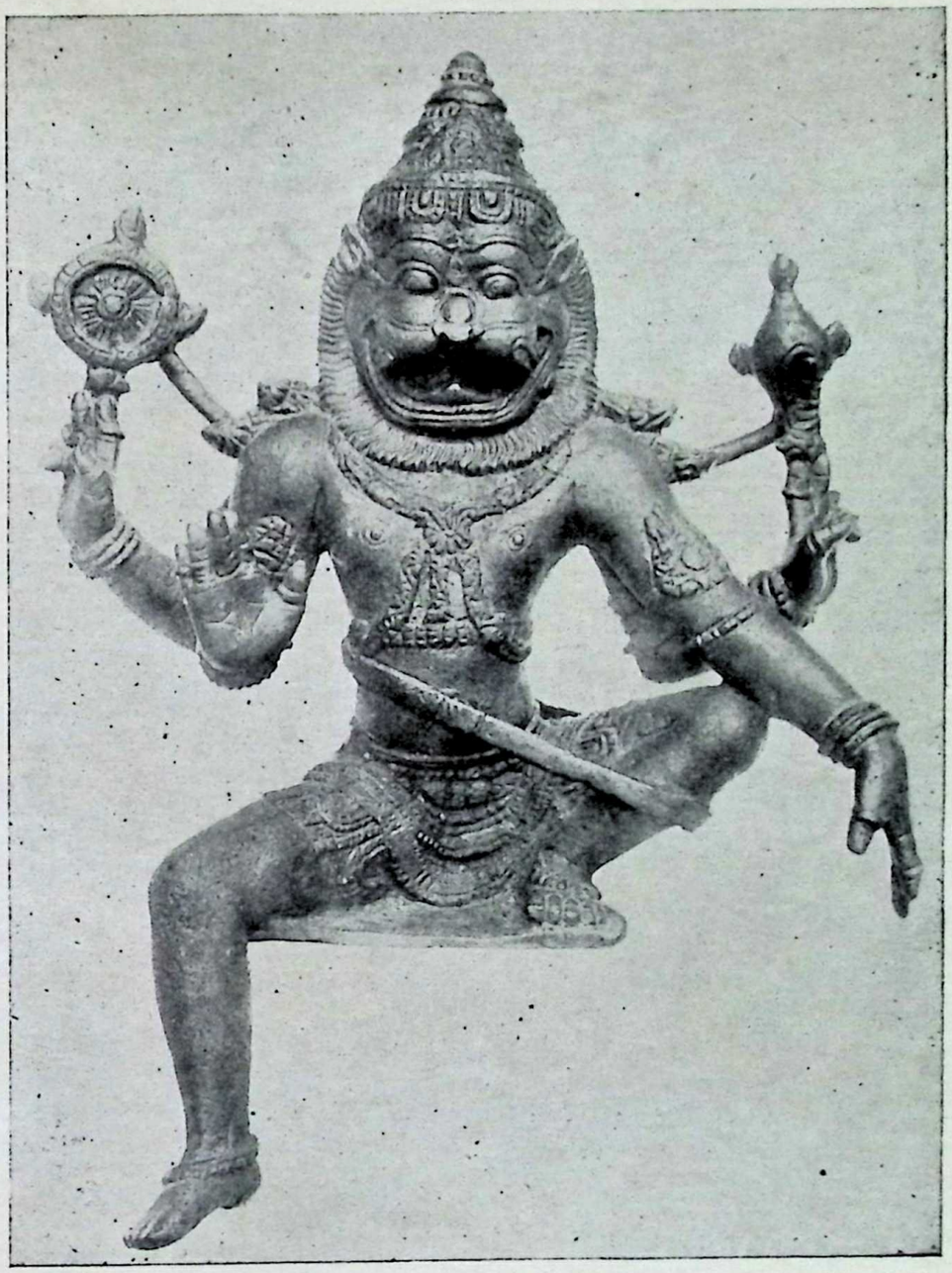

Fig. 283

PLATE CLXXIV.

Fig. 284. Niśumbhasūdanī, Tambikkoṭṭai-Vaḍakāḍu, Tanjore District; second quarter of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 285. Gaṇeśa, Kīḻakkurichi, in the former Pudukottai State now in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai; date same as above.

Fig. 284

Fig. 285

PLATE CLXXV.

Fig. 286. Umā, seated, Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tanjore District; middle of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 287. Kāliya-kṛishṇa, Nilappaḍi, Tanjore District; date same as above.

Fig. 286

Fig. 287

PLATE CLXXVI.

Fig. 288. Naṭeśa, Zamin Peraiyūr, Tiruchirappalli District; date same as of Fig. 287.

Fig. 289. Pārvatī, Tiruvāḍuturai, Tanjore District; third quarter of the 15th century A.D.

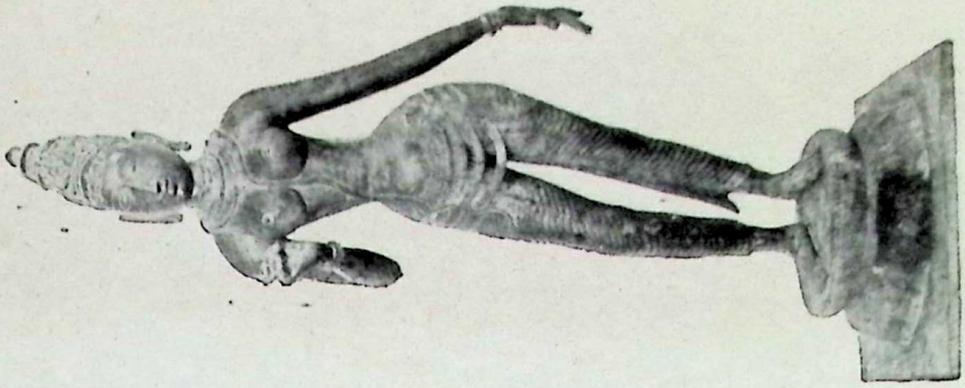

Fig. 289

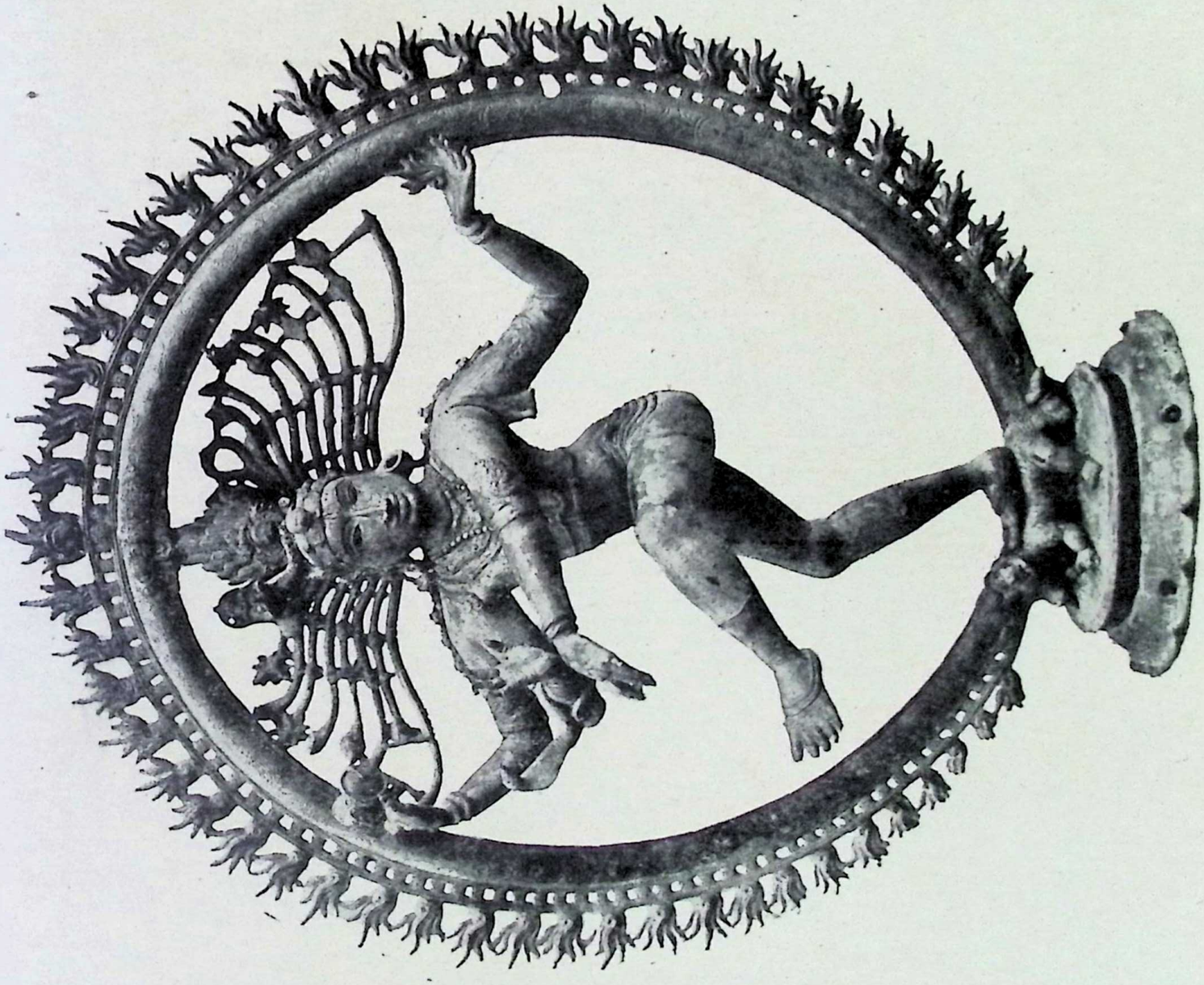

Fig. 288

PLATE CLXXVII.

Fig. 290. Chaṇḍikeśvara, belonging to Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 289.

Fig. 291. Kāliya-kṛishṇa, Sundarapperumāḷ-kovil, Tanjore District; date same as above.

Fig. 292. Rear view of above.

Fig. 293. Pārvatī, Jāmbavānoḍai, Tanjore District; last quarter of the 15th century A.D.

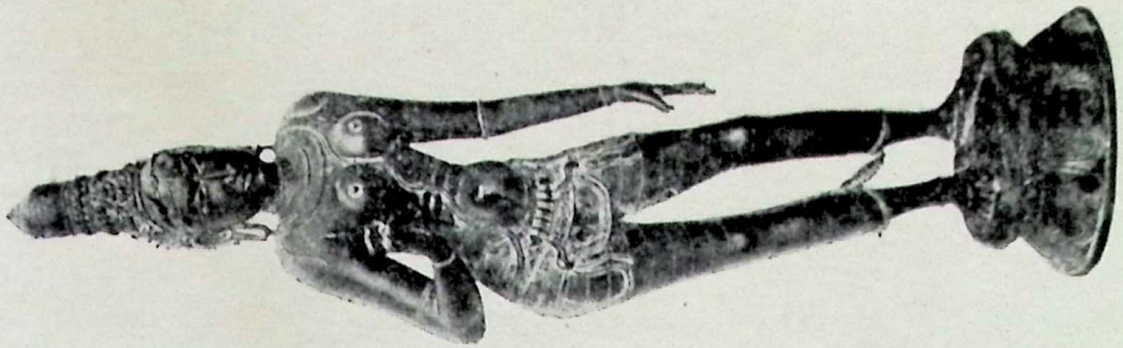

Fig. 293

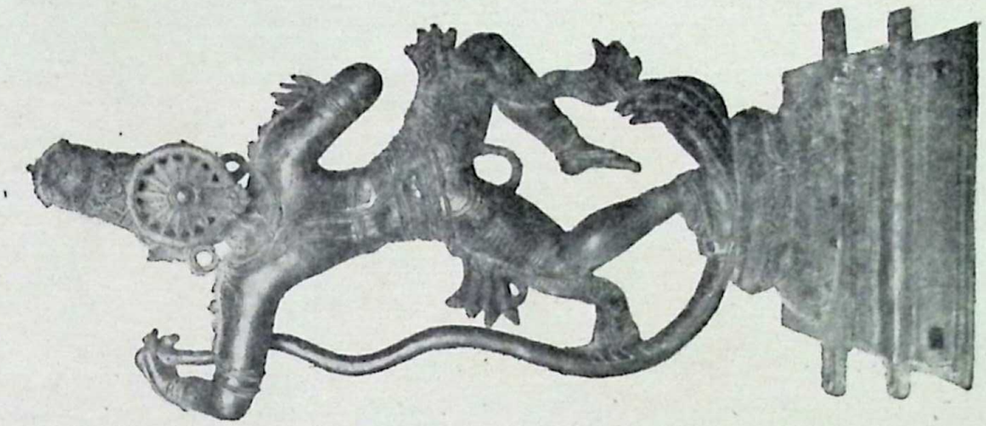

Fig. 292

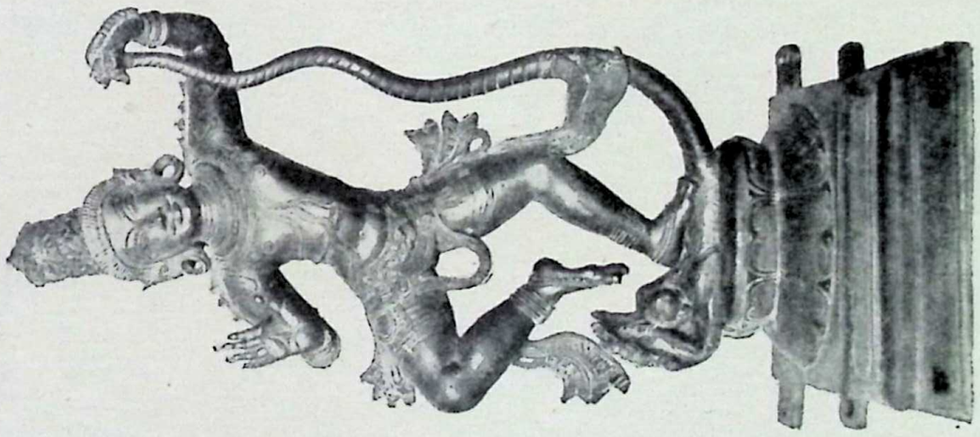

Fig. 291

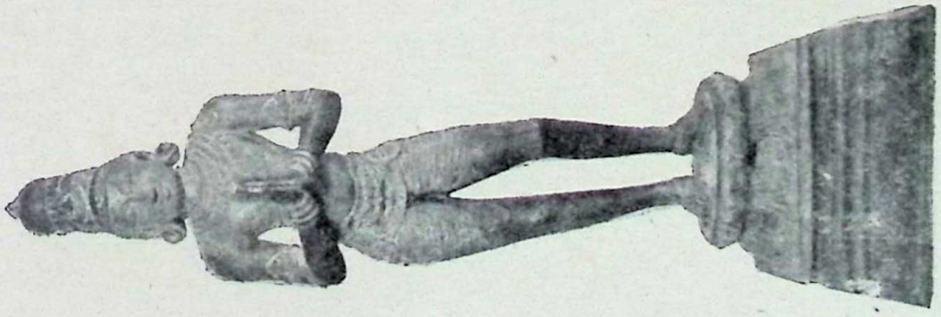

Fig. 290

PLATE CLXXVIII.

Fig. 294. Naṭeśa, Belūr, Salem District; Kali 4611 = A.D. 1510.

Fig. 295. Bhairava, from Tanjore District; first quarter of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 294

Fig. 295

PLATE CLXXIX.

Fig. 296. Goddess, standing, Śrīraṅgam, Tiruchirappalli District; middle of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 297. Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār, Śrīnivāsanallūr, Tiruchirappalli District; date same as above.

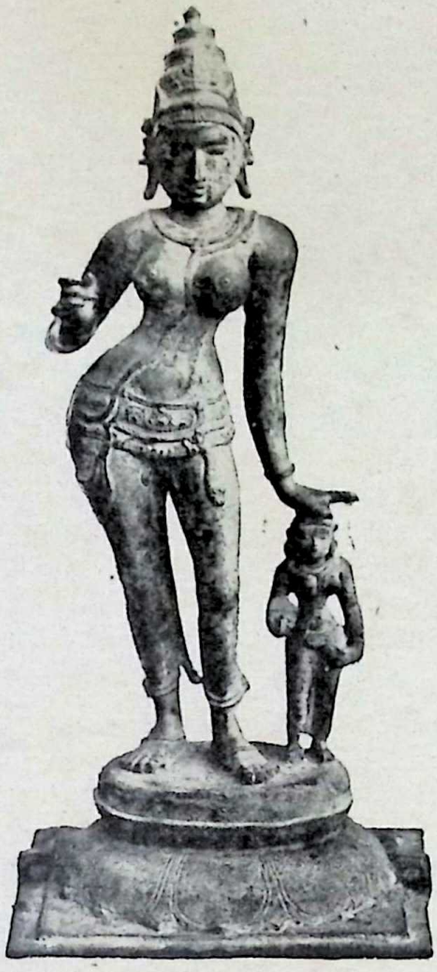

Fig. 296

Fig. 297

PLATE CLXXX.

Fig. 298. Sudarśana, locality not known; now in the Tanjore Art Gallery; about the third quarter of the 16th century A.D.

Figs. 299 and 299 A. Saṅgili and Paravai (consorts of Sundaramūrti-nāyanār), back view, Tiruvāymūr, Tanjore District; second half of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 298

Fig. 299

Fig. 299 A

PLATE CLXXXI.

Fig. 300. Subrahmaṇya as Śikhivāhana, Muḷḷaṅguḍi, Tanjore District; last quarter of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 301. Rear view of above.

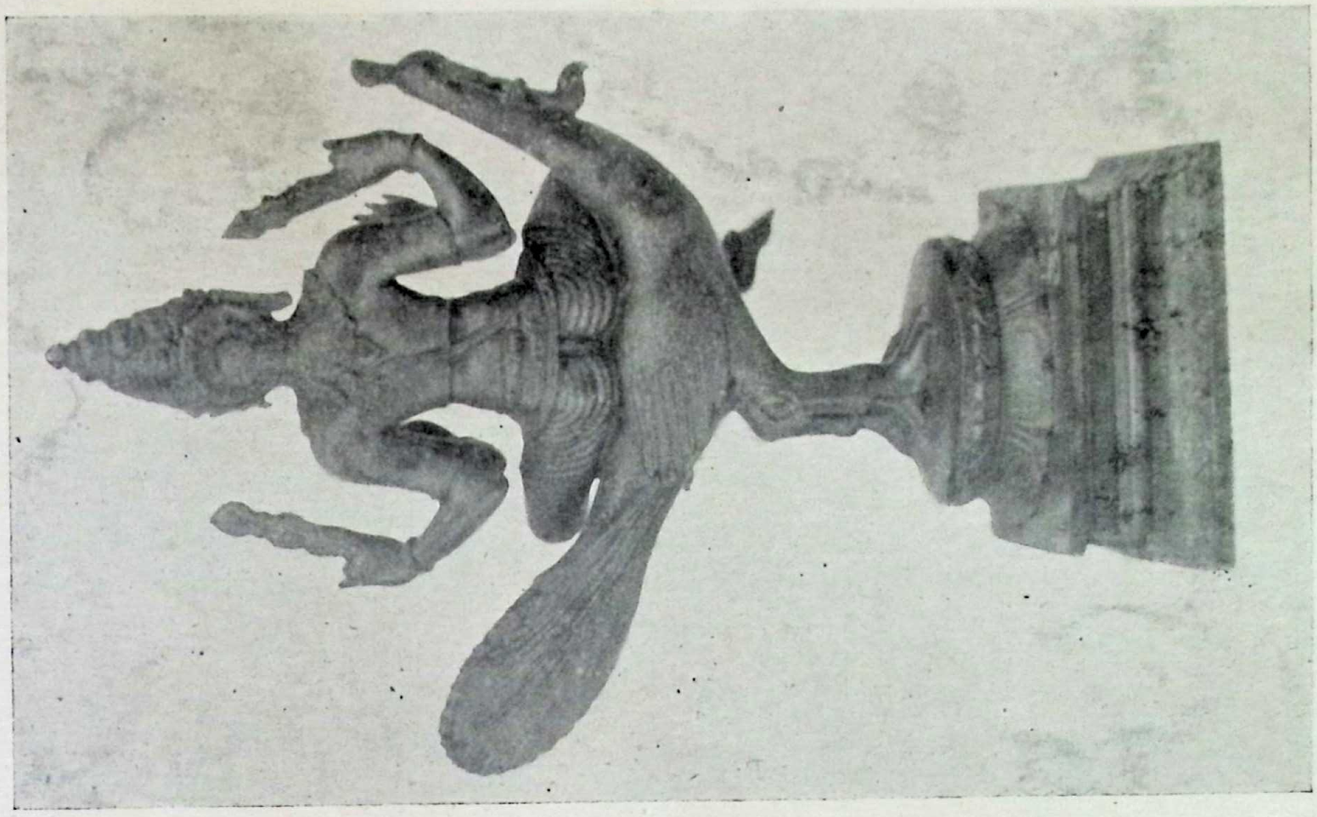

Fig. 301

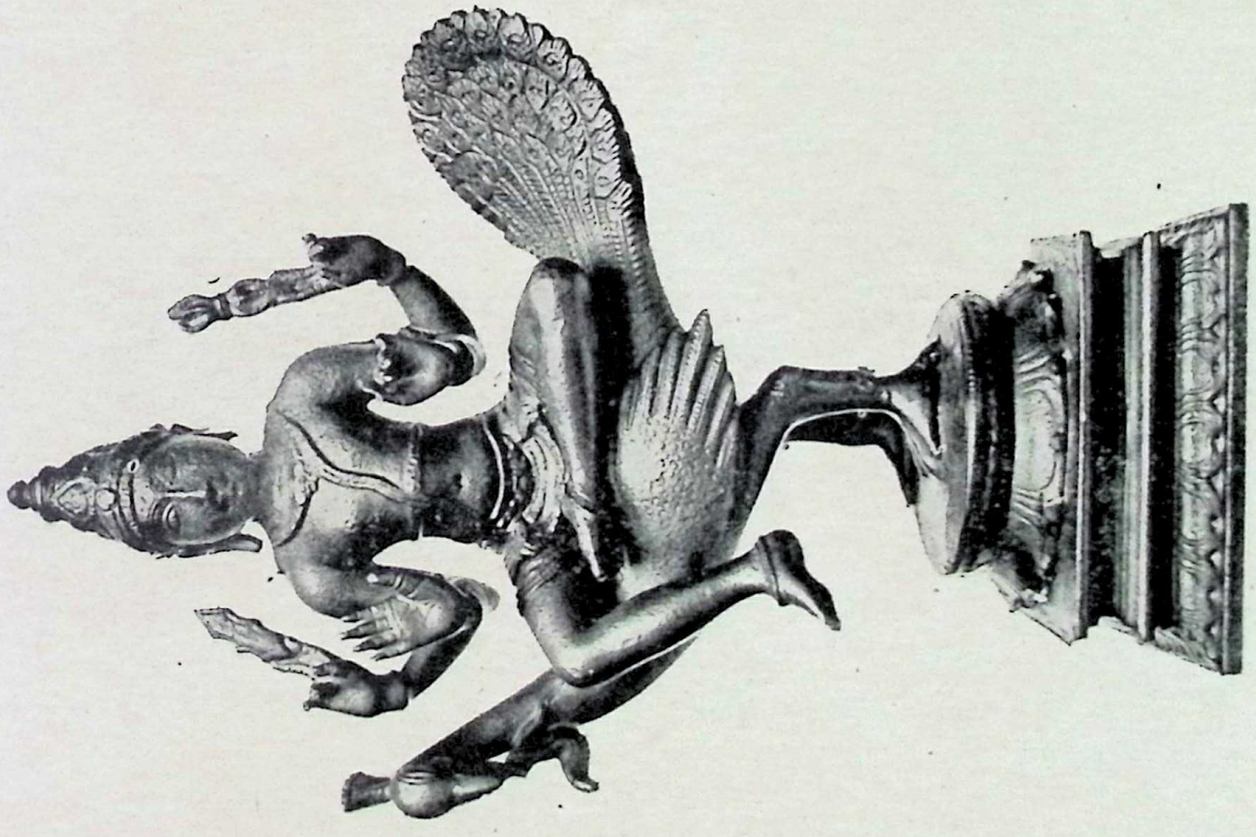

Fig. 300

PLATE CLXXXII.

Fig. 302. Pradoshamūrti, Tiruvāḍuturai, Tanjore District; probably in the temple there: date same as of Fig. 300.

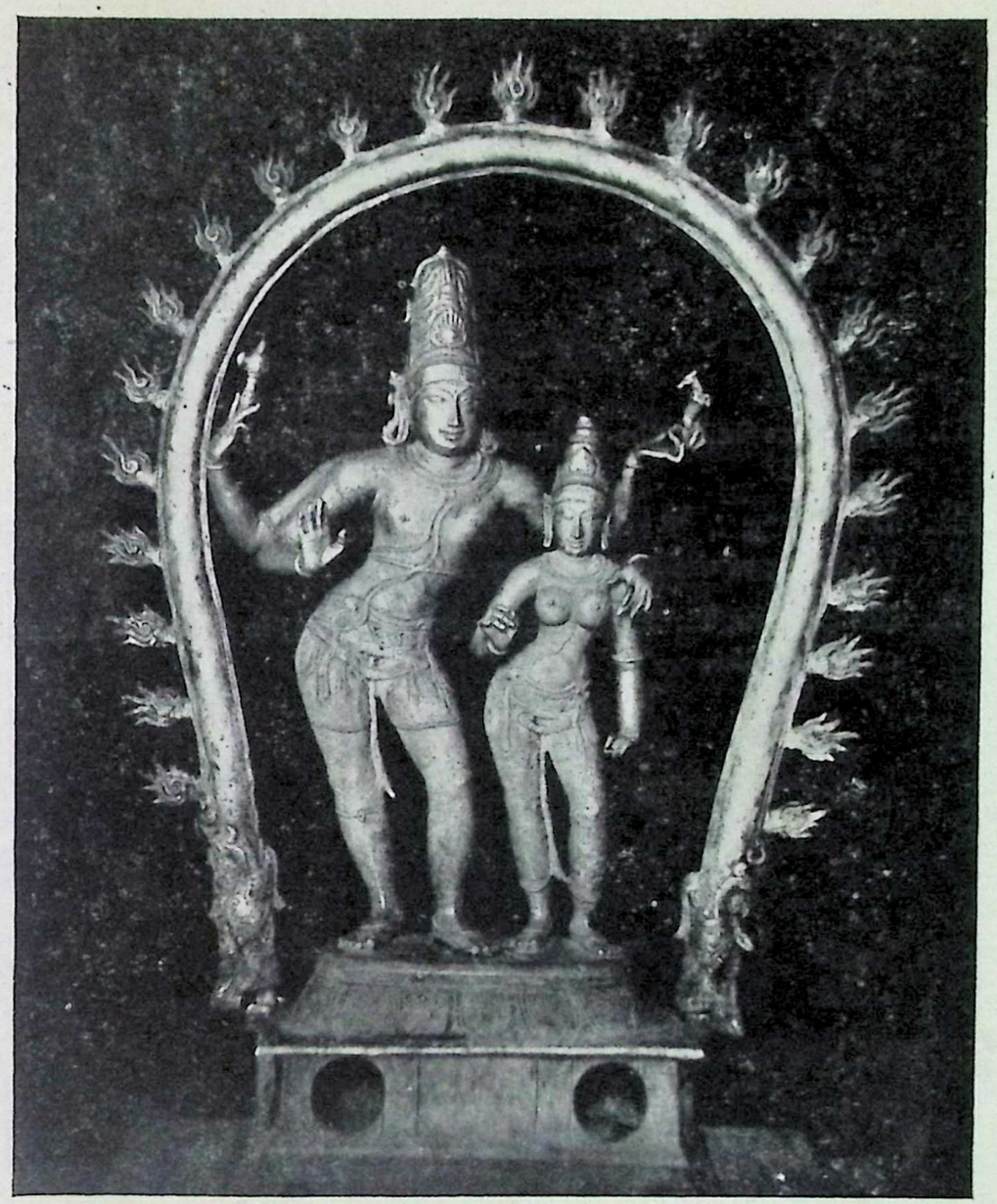

Fig. 302

PLATE CLXXXIII.

Fig. 303. Vishṇu as Vaikuṇṭha-nātha with consorts, Polagam, Tanjore District; about 1600 A.D.

Fig. 304. Devasenāpati, Tiruveḷvikkuḍi. Tanjore District; in the temple there; beginning of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 305. Kālārimūrti, Tirukkaḍavūr, Tanjore District; in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 304.

Fig. 303

Fig. 304

Fig. 305

PLATE CLXXXIV.

Fig. 306. Jñānasambanda, Vaḍakkuppoyyūr, Tanjore District; about the first quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 307. Pradoshamūrti, from Tanjore District; date same as of Fig 306.

Fig. 308. Appar, Madukkūr, Tanjore District; in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 307.

Fig. 309. Jñānasambanda, from the same place as above and in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 308.

Fig. 306

Fig 307

Fig. 308

Fig. 309

PLATE CLXXXV.

Fig. 310. Māṇikkavāchakar, from the same place as Fig. 309 and in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 309.

Fig. 311. Rear view of above.

Fig. 312. Sundaramūrṭi and Paravai, from the same place as above and in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 310.

Fig. 313. Rear view of Paravai of above group.

Fig. 310

Fig. 311

Fig. 312

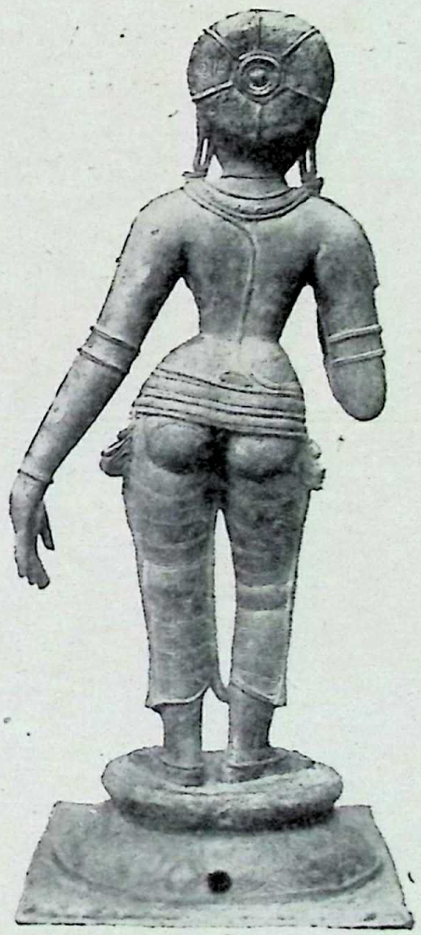

Fig. 313

PLATE CLXXXVI.

Fig. 314. Bālakṛishṇa, crawling, Uḷundaṅguḍi, Tiruchirappalli District; beginning of the second quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 315. Yaśodā-kṛishṇa, Thogūr, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 314.

Fig. 316. Aiyanār on elephant, from the same place as above; date same as of Fig. 315.

Fig. 317. Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, belonging to the Dharmapuram Ādhīnam, Tanjore District; second quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 314

Fig. 315

Fig. 316

Fig. 317

PLATE CLXXXVII.

Fig. 317 A. Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, Tirutturaippūṇḍi, Tanjore District; in the temple there; date same as of Fig. 317.

Fig. 318. Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa, Peruntoṭṭam, Tanjore District; middle of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 319. Hanumān, locality not known; now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London; date same as of Fig. 318.

Fig. 320. Kaṇṇappa-nāyanār, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu, Chittoor District; date same as of Fig. 319.

Fig. 318

Fig. 319

Fig. 320

Fig. 317 A

PLATE CLXXXVIII.

Fig. 321. Śiva, seated ; in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai ; third quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 322. Gaṇeśa, dancing, locality not known ; third quarter of the 17th century A.D.

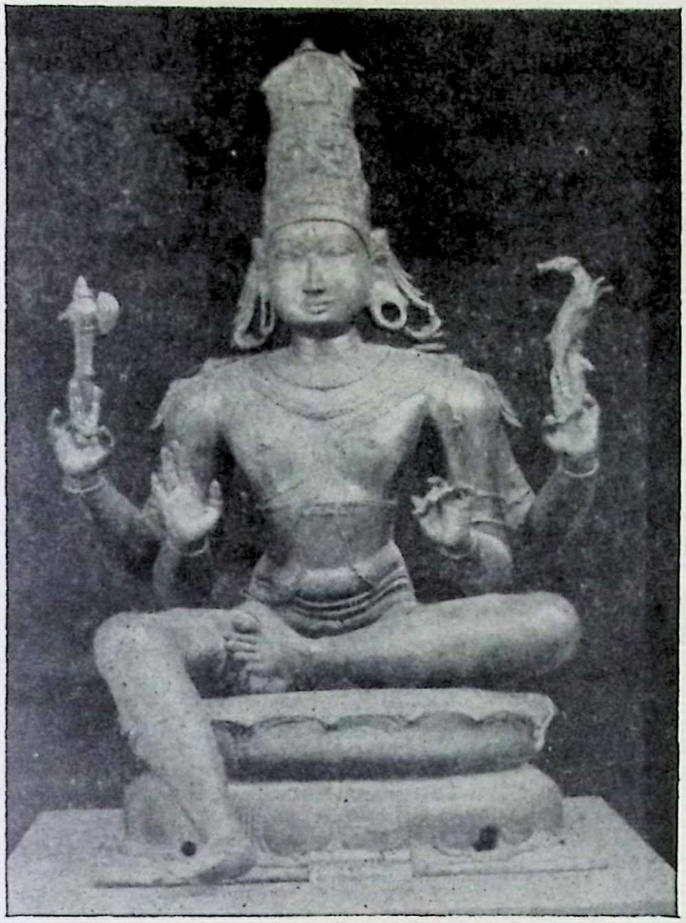

Fig. 321

Fig. 322

PLATE CLXXXIX.

Fig. 323. Ugra-narasiṁha; in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai; last quarter of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 324. Bhairava, Kālahasti, Chittoor District; in the Śiva temple there; date same as of Fig. 323.

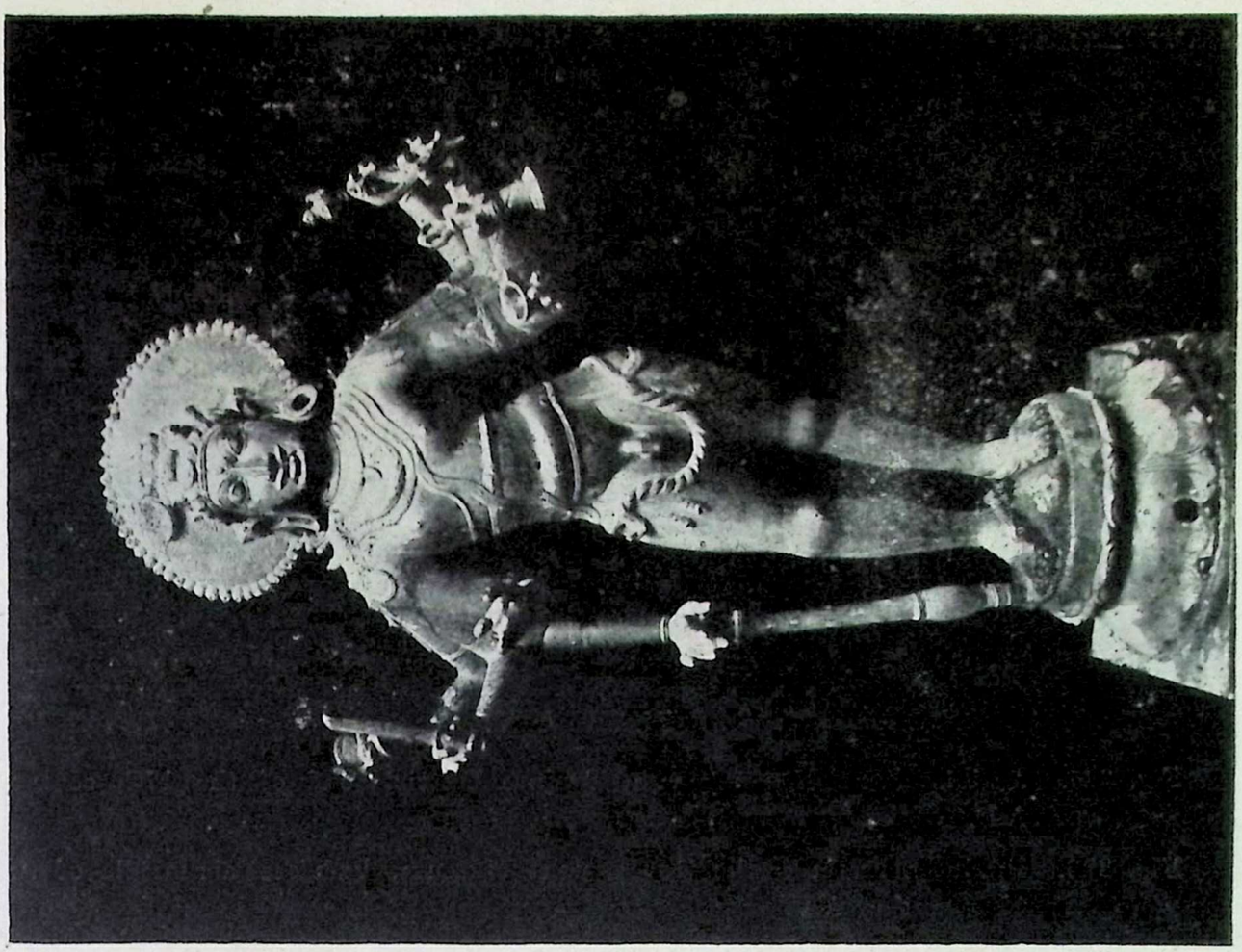

Fig. 324

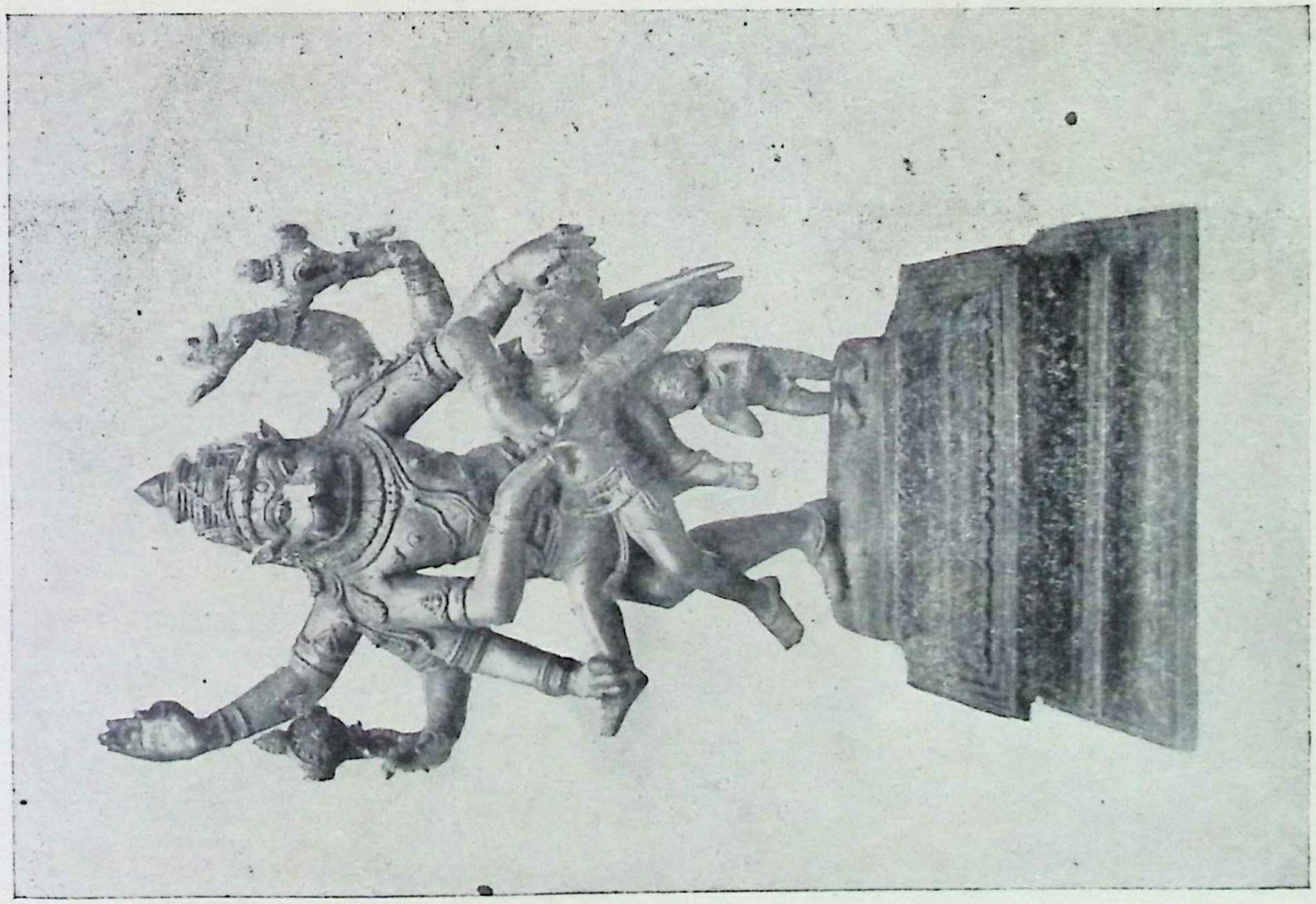

Fig. 323

PLATE CXC.

Fig. 325. Avalokiteśvara, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tanjore District; end of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 326. Pradoshamūrti; in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai; middle of the 15th century A.D.

Fig. 327. Kāliya-kṛishṇa, Madurai; in the Kūḍal Aḻagar temple there; last quarter of the 15th century A.D.

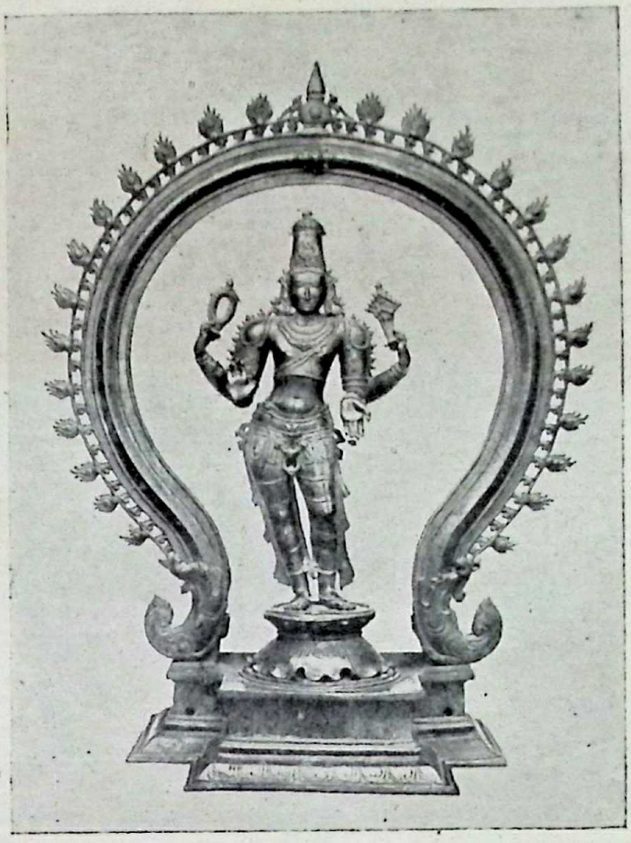

Fig. 325

Fig. 326

Fig. 327

PLATE CXCI.

Fig. 328. Kṛishṇa with Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā, Sermādevi, Tirunelveli Dīstrict; date same as of Fig 327.

Fig. 329. Sundaramūrti, Tirunelveli, Tirunelveli District; in the Nellaiyappar (Śiva) temple there; date same as of Fig. 328.

Fig. 328

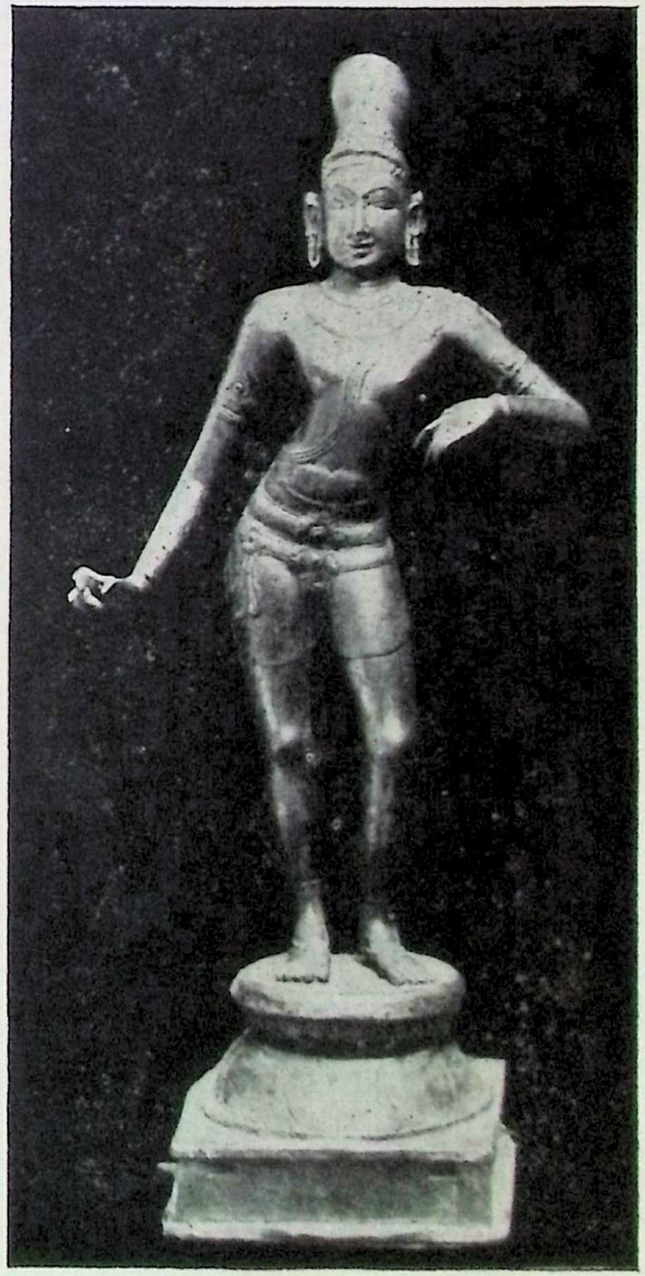

Fig. 329

PLATE CXCII.

Fig. 330. Kṛishṇa, Ambāsamudram, Tirunelveli District; in the Kṛishṇa temple there; first quarter of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 331. Adhikāra-nandi with consort, Vettiālaṅguḷam, Ramanathapuram District; middle of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 332. Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, Kuttālam, Tirunelveli District; in the Śiva temple there; third quarter of the 16th century A.D.

Fig. 333. Sundaramūrti, from the same place as above; about 1600 A.D.

Fig. 330

Fig. 331

Fig. 332

Fig. 333

PLATE CXCIII.

Fig. 334. Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī, Ammāppeṭṭai, Madurai District; about the middle of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 335. Garuḍa, Kaṇkoḍuttavanitam, Tanjore District; first half of the 17th century A.D.

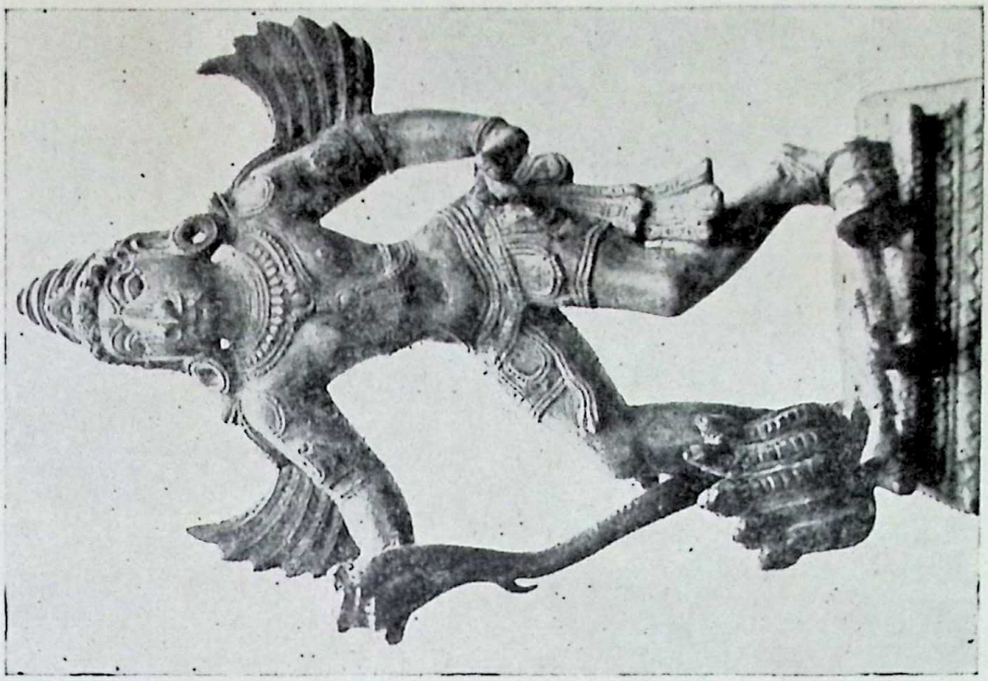

Fig. 335

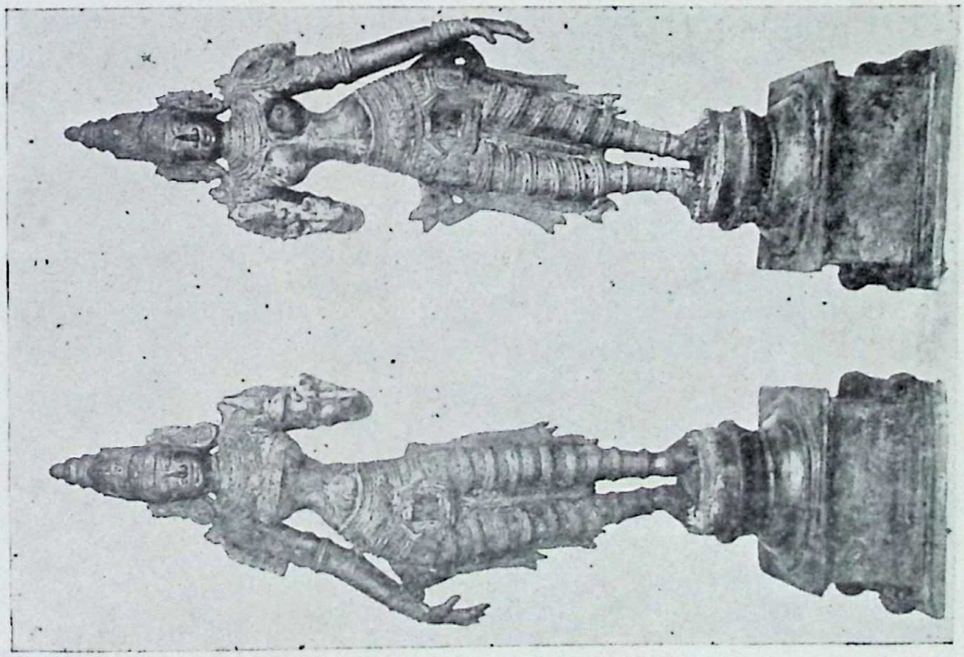

Fig. 334

PLATE CXCIV.

Fig. 336. Vīrabhadra, Tiruvālaṅgāḍu, Chittoor District; second half of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 337. Kaṅkāḷamūrti, Kuttālam, Tirunelveli District; in the Śiva temple there; about 1700 A.D.

Fig. 336

Fig. 337

PLATE CXCV.

Fig. 338. Kāliya-kṛishṇa, Palani, Madurai District; middle of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 339. Naṭeśa, locality not known; now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.; about 1800 A.D.

Fig. 340. Śiva, seated; in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai; first quarter of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 341. Yaśodā-kṛishṇa, Uppiliyapuram, Tiruchirappalli District; middle of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 338

Fig. 339

Fig. 340

Fig. 341

PLATE CXCVI.

Fig. 342. Varadarāja, locality not known; date same as of Fig. 341.

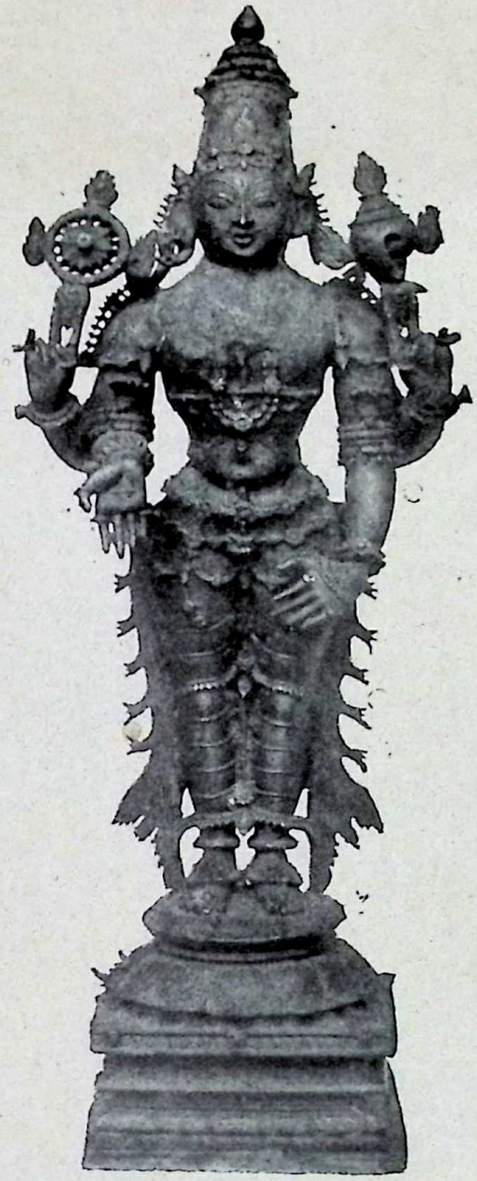

Fig. 342

PLATE CXCVII.

Fig. 343. Varadarāja, locality not known; second half of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 343

PLATE CXCVIII.

Fig. 344. Dvārapālaka, in the Government Museum, Trichūr, Kerala State; 17th century A.D.

Fig. 345. Durgā, in the same institution as above; beginning of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 346. Devī, in the same institution as above; 19th century A.D.

Fig. 344

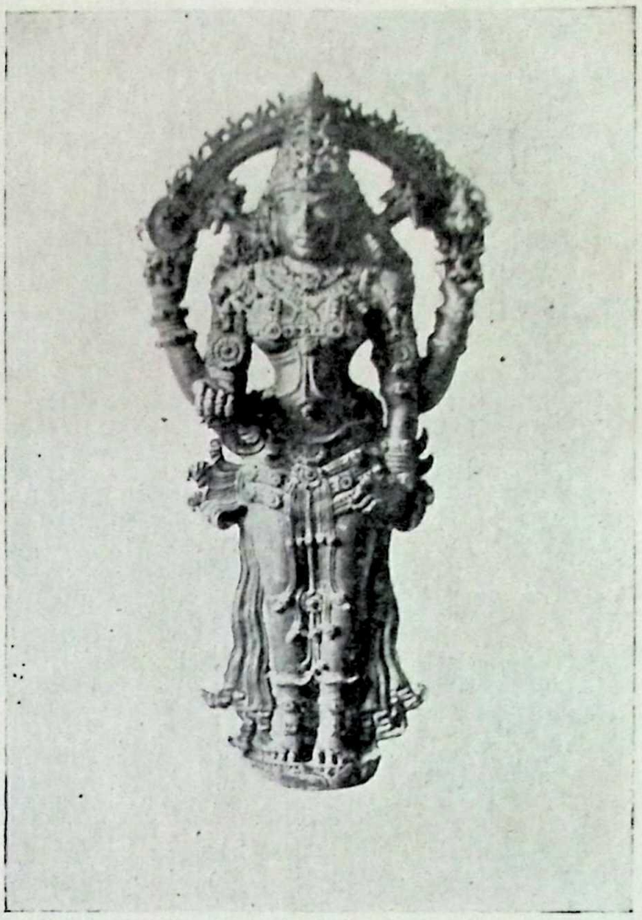

Fig. 345

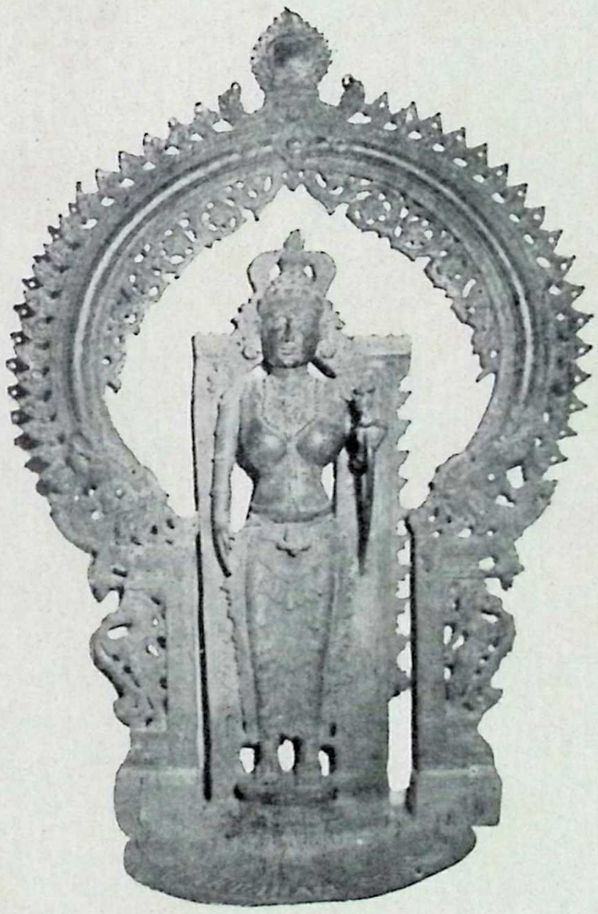

Fig. 346

PLATE CXCIX.

Fig. 347. Somāskanda, Nellore Town, Nellore District ; end of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 348. Vishṇu with Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī, Yerrempaḷem, East Godavari District ; about the middle of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 349. Rāma and Sītā, Chimakūrti, Guntur District ; end of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 347

Fig. 348

Fig. 349

PLATE CC.

Fig. 350. Chandraśekhara, Vaḍakkuppoyyūr, Tanjore District; early decades of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 351. Durgā, standing, Pudukkuḍi, Tanjore District; second half of the 17th century A.D.

Fig. 352. Rear view of above.

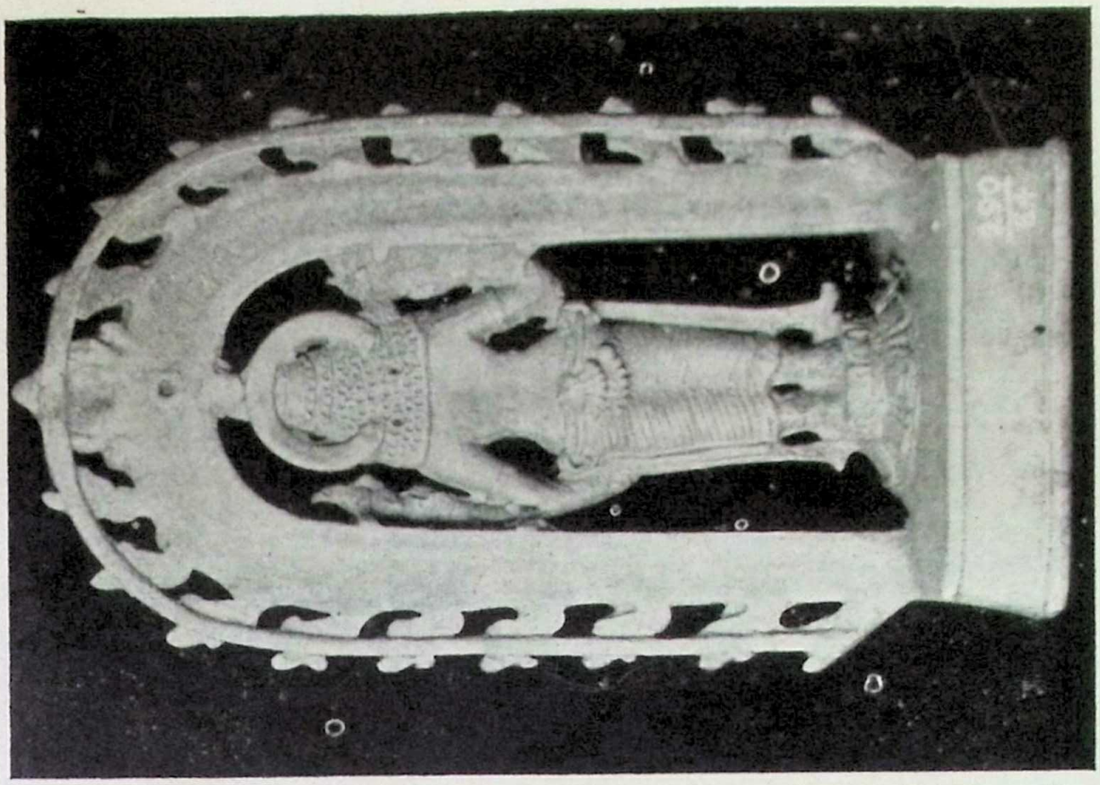

Fig. 352

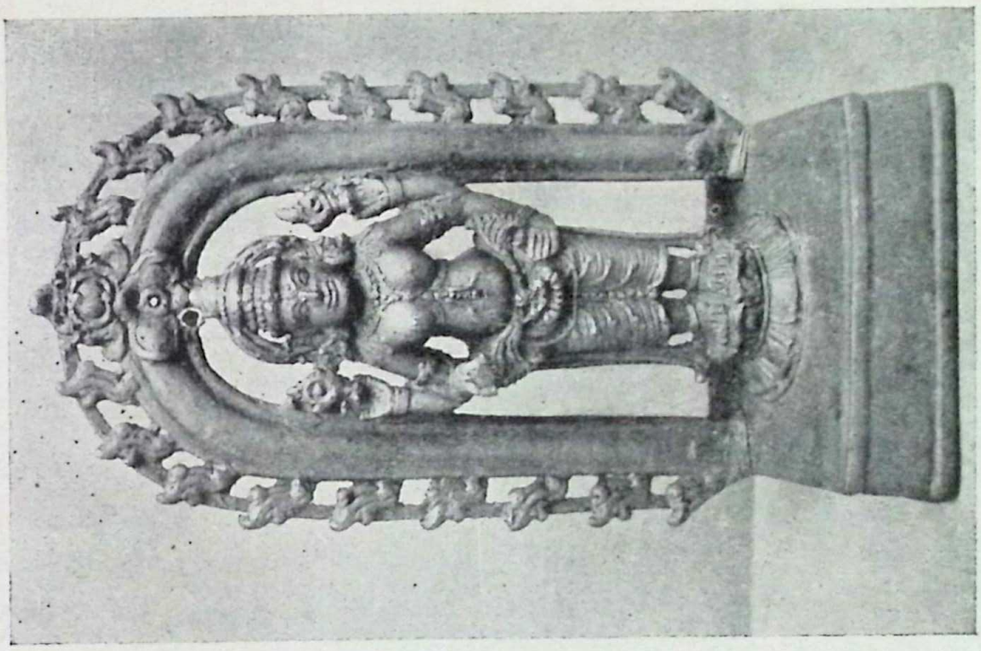

Fig. 351

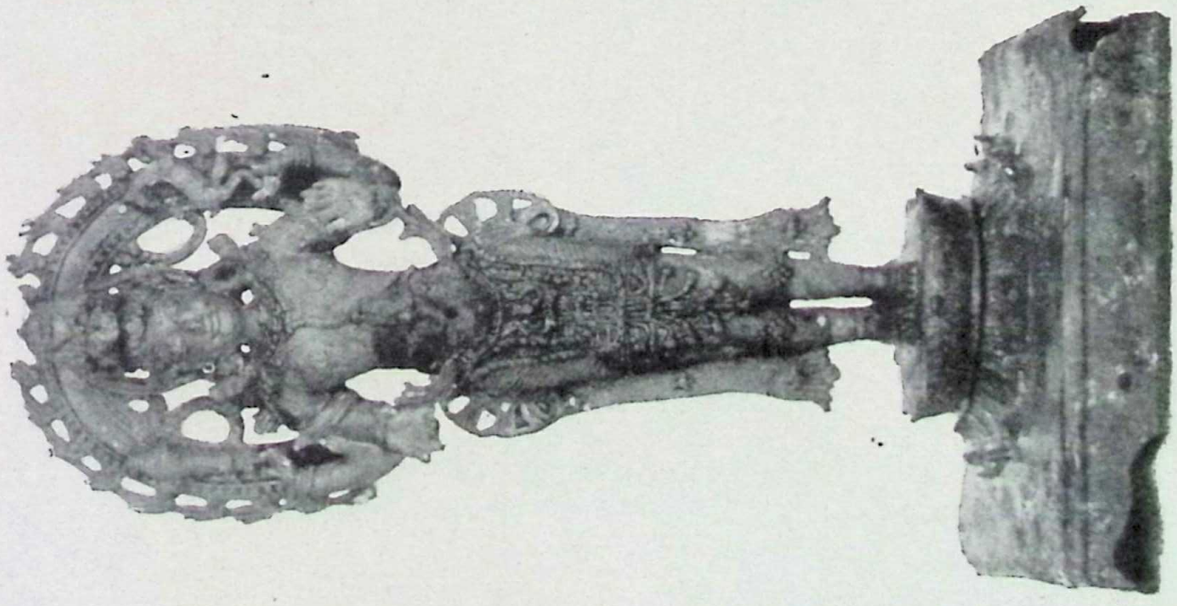

Fig. 350

PLATE CCI.

Fig. 353. Vishāpaharaṇa, standing, Seṭṭipulam, Tanjore District; first quarter of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 354. Śrīnivāsa, standing, Palani, Madurai District; date same as of Fig. 353.

Fig. 355. Vishṇu, standing, Eḷumagaḷūr, Tanjore District; second half of the 18th century A.D.

Fig. 353

Fig. 354

Fig. 355

PLATE CCII.

Fig. 356. Goddess (probably Pārvatī), standing, Pudūr East, Salem District; about 1800 A.D.

Fig. 357. Durgā, standing, Naikuppam, Ramanathapuram District; about the beginning of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 358. Chandraśekhara, Kārappiḍāgai, Tanjore District; date same as of Fig. 357.

Fig. 359. Worshipper, Vaḍakkuppaṇaiyūr, Tanjore District; about the second half of the 18th century A.D.

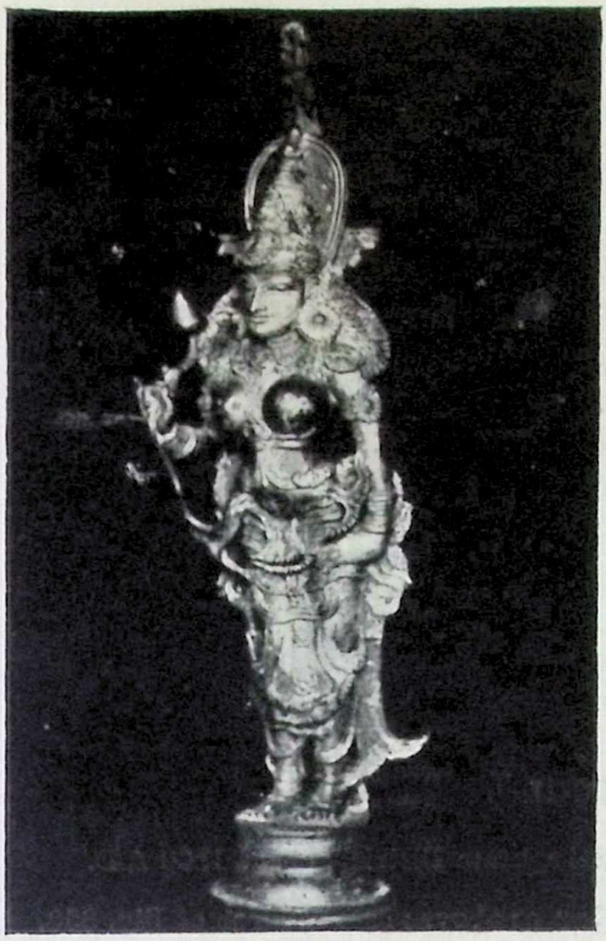

Fig. 356

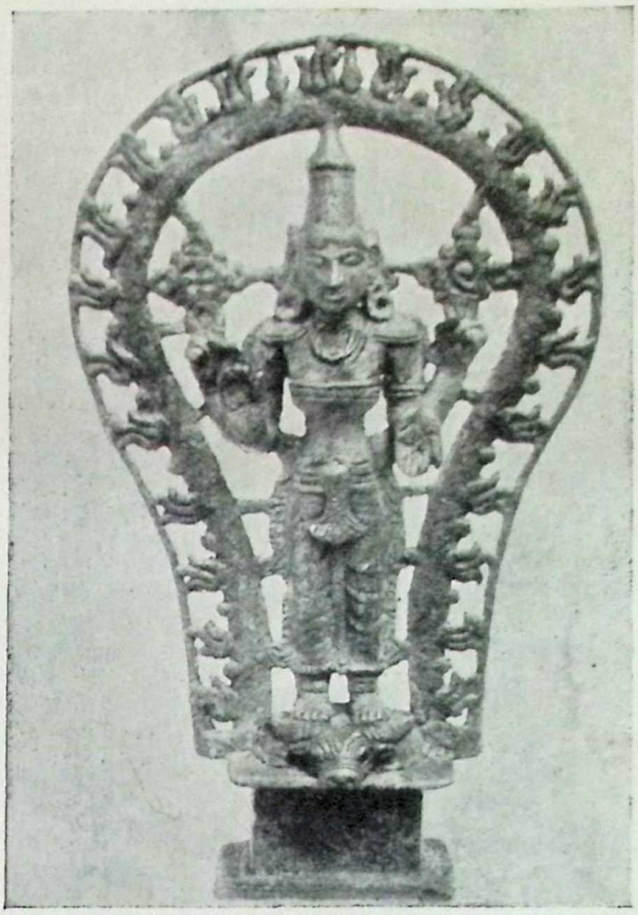

Fig. 357

Fig. 358

Fig. 359

PLATE CCIII.

Fig. 360. Madurai-vīraṇ, Naikuppam, Ramanathapuram District; about 1800 A.D.

Fig. 361. Saṅgilikkaruppaṇ, from the same place as above; date same as of Fig. 360.

Fig. 362. Karuppaṇṇasvāmi, from the same place as above; date same as of Fig. 361.

Fig. 363. Yaśodā-kṛishṇa, from the same place as above; about the beginning of the 19th century A.D.

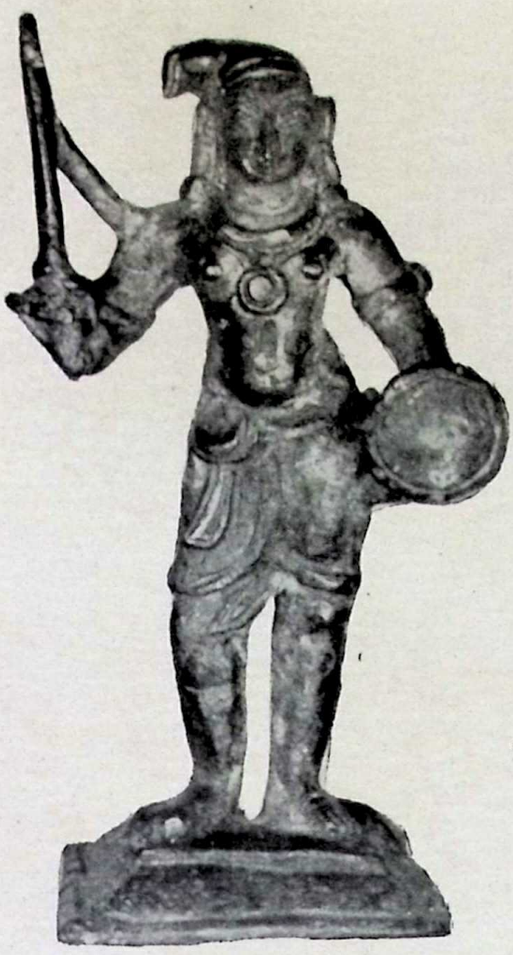

Fig. 360

Fig. 361

Fig. 362

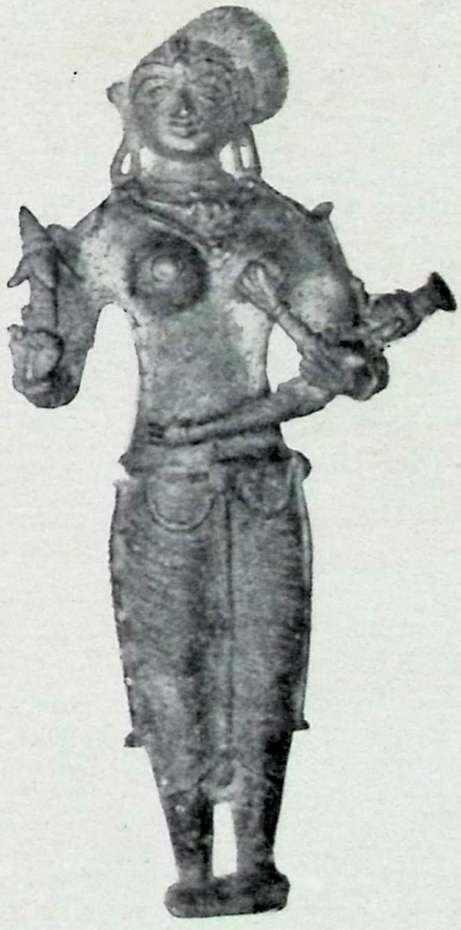

Fig. 363

PLATE CCIV.

Fig. 364. Vishṇu, from the same place as Fig. 363; first quarter of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 365. Durgā, from the same place as above; date same as of Fig. 364.

Fig. 366. Aiyanār, locality not known; date same as of Fig. 365.

Fig. 367. Worshipper, Kārappiḍāgai, Tanjore District; about 1800 A.D.

Fig. 364

Fig, 365

Fig. 366

Fig. 367

PLATE CCV.

Fig. 368. Kāḷī, from the same place as Fig. 367 ; date same as of Fig. 367.

Fig. 369. Grāma-devatā, from the same place as above ; about the first quarter of the 19th century A.D.

Fig. 370. Grāma-devatā, from the same place as above; date same as of Fig. 369.

Fig. 371. Grāma-devatā, Madurai, in the Kūḍal Aḻagar temple there ; date same as of Fig. 370.

Fig. 372. Grāma-devatā, locality not known ; date same as of Fig. 371.

Fig. 373. Yaśodā-kṛishṇa, locality not known ; date same as of Fig 372.

Fig. 368

Fig. 369

Fig. 370

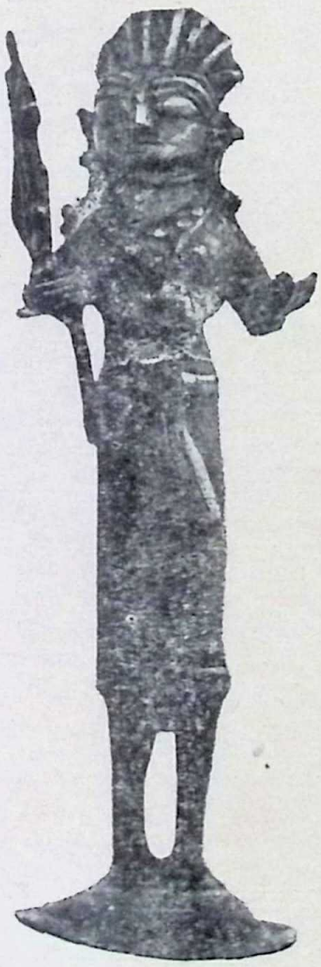

Fig. 371

Fig. 372

Fig. 373

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